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ART. I.—*Life of Cowper.*

*The Life of* WILLIAM COWPER, Esq. By THOMAS TAYLOR. Philadelphia. 1833.

WHEN we saw that a new life of Cowper was offered to the world, we imagined that some able hand had undertaken to give a philosophical view of his character and writings; and such is the interest which still follows him as a poet and a man, that we can hardly conceive of a finer subject for a sagacious and discriminating mind. Considering how little we are generally interested in any poetry excepting that of the day, it is rather surprising that he should still stand so prominently before the public eye; we mean the eye of all who are interested in subjects of the kind, a class which does not by any means embrace the whole human race, even in civilized countries. He is yet, though a quarter of a century has passed since his death, and twice that period since his day of fame, so interesting by reason of his genius and his sorrows, that any writer, who could do justice to the one, and give a rational explanation of the other, would be sure of a hearing and a welcome from the reading world. The mysterious affection of his mind, which wrapped it sometimes in sudden and painful eclipse, and then, without apparent cause, suffered it to shine out with surpassing brightness, seems so much more like the capricious agency of an evil spirit than the common effect of dis-



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ease, that its details, furnished by his own powerful and desperate hand, are eagerly devoured by vulgar curiosity, while more enlightened investigators study it as a marvellous page in the history of mind. Then too, all who have a taste for poetry, whether natural or refined, admire his faithful descriptions, his familiar truth to nature, and the manly grace and English freedom with which he walks in the path where those before him went with measured step, and manner suited to the prevailing taste, which they either worshipped as perfect, or had not enterprise enough to alter. Now had a biographer appeared, who had penetration enough to discover, and independence enough to tell the world what Cowper was, instead of repeating the dictations of party, he might have satisfied his own reasonable ambition, by repairing the statue which has been injured by the conflicts carried on around it, though not worn by the waste of time.

The present period is quite favorable for such an undertaking. So many fierce battles were fought concerning him, as soon as he was in the dust, that a long breathing-space necessarily followed; and accordingly the subject has been left untouched for some years, or agitated in a manner which seemed like a returning echo of old and narrow opinions. Cowper had an enterprising mind, however timid and retiring in his habits and feelings. He struck out a new track for himself, and walked in it with so much glory and success, that his example of enterprise was followed; and in the brilliant period of poetry with which the present century began, each minstrel consulted his own taste and power, insomuch that, as once it happened in Israel, the highways were all deserted. To this breaking up of old associations we owe the fairy wildness of Southey, the oriental richness of Moore, the Druidical inspirations of Wordsworth, and the varied enchantment of Scott. They might possibly have written as they did had Cowper never existed, but any one who knows the power of classical associations must be aware, that hundreds see the benefit of change before one dares to make it. Cowper himself, perhaps, hermit as he was, did not feel the greatness of his adventure. But shortly after the declaration of its independence, the republic of letters was divided into fierce and bloody parties, each maintaining that its own writing, and nothing else, was poetry. The general strain of the dispute resembled the lawsuit between the eyes and the nose, contending to which

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the spectacles rightfully belonged; but it was not by any means so easily decided. As no general law could be established to determine the invariable principles of poetry, which would have been in effect to reëstablish the despotism which had just been broken down, nothing remained but for men of similar tastes to associate themselves in schools, each with its peculiar and exclusive opinions. Far be it from us to revive the memory of these schools and their border wars. As often happens, what was peculiar to each was erroneous, and the truth was common to them all. That of Wordsworth has subsisted longest, but is losing its exclusiveness as fast as his poetry gains its rightful place in the public mind. But now that hostilities are over, and schools and creeds sinking into a forgetfulness, which we hope will be eternal, the times are favorable to a fair and impartial discussion of the poetical merits of Cowper,—showing how far he was affected by circumstances, how much he accomplished, and what accidental causes either aided or hindered his success.

Our readers may naturally doubt whether the state of the religious world be equally favorable to impartiality, but we trust that there is more enlargement of mind than in former days, since controversies, though not more gentle than formerly, are argued on more liberal and enlightened grounds. But whether this be so or not, it is evident that a fair view of the subject of Cowper's depression need not give offence to any religious party. Hayley and others, who did not agree with Cowper in his sentiments, have generally described his complaint as religious despondency; a phrase which has given much offence to those who hold those opinions. Even Montgomery, who, one would think, lived far enough from the scene of action to be able to keep his temper, expresses himself thus: 'In spite of unanswerable confutations of the ignorant and malignant falsehood, the enemies of Christian truth persevere in asserting that too much religion made poor Cowper mad. If they be sincere, they are themselves under the strongest delusion; and it will be well if it prove not, on their part, a wilful one,—it will be well if they have not reached that last perversity of human reason, to believe a falsehood of their own invention;'—and more equally in the spirit of the Gospel.

We know not where these stormy denunciations are meant to fall; for we think that no one who reads Cowper's history can suppose, that his depression was owing to religion. It is commonly thought necessary, that a cause should be antecedent to

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the effect in time: now every one knows, that prior to his confinement he was not overburdened with religion of any kind. His disease was insanity, which was immediately brought on or rather brought to a point by his dread of a public appearance before the House of Lords. Far from charging his insanity to his religion, the enemy of his religious opinions would be much more likely to ascribe his religion to his insanity, and to attempt to show, that the peculiar aspect in which that subject presented itself to his mind, was occasioned or affected by the gloom which he had just passed through. But if we understand the question, the suggestion, which gave so much offence, was that his madness took the form of religious anxiety. This is undeniably true: his prevailing feeling was despair of salvation; but it is evident that the fierce agony of his disease, and not his religion, was the source and origin of that despair. It being admitted, then, that no views of religion are answerable for this insanity, which was the result of his constitutional tendencies, irritated by unfortunate circumstances through all his youth and manhood up to the hour when reason gave way before them, it is not to be supposed that any sect could take offence at a discussion of the question, whether other views than those which he adopted would have done more to secure the peace and happiness of his later years. Or, if party spirit is too jealous to permit this question to be debated by those who are enslaved to it, it is only necessary that the enquiry should be conducted by one who has a respect for all conscientious opinions, but is in bondage to none.

Since the times are favorable to an impartial estimate of the merits of this distinguished man, we cannot help regarding it as a signal calamity, that he should have fallen into the hands of Mr. Thomas Taylor. We know not whence he came, nor whither he is going; the publishers do not inform us whether this is a reprint of an English work or not; but though left in the dark on these subjects, which it concerns reviewers to know, we say, with confidence, that Mr. Taylor was never created to be the biographer of Cowper. No new facts were to be expected, and none are given, save one, viz. that 'toward his excellent father he had always felt the strongest parental regard.' The whole work consists of shreds and patches, taken partly from the writings of Cowper, and partly from the biographies and criticisms of others, strung together

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with a want of skill which does much to destroy their charm. Hayley's Life, it is true, was made up in the same way; but then Cowper's letters were new, and Hayley was wise enough to know, that to permit Cowper to be his own historian would give the work a surprising attraction. But now, when those who would read a new biography are already familiar with his letters and history, the biographer must adopt a different course, and one which requires higher qualifications. He must, to be sure, set down the incidents of Cowper's life, but this is a trifling part of his duty. He must tell us what Cowper was, and show how far circumstances tended to make him what he was; he must explain to us the nature and spirit of his mind, and the strength and weakness of his heart; he must show us what that mysterious affection was, before which he sometimes bowed down in infant helplessness, while, at other times, he threw it off like dust from the eagle's wing. In short, a biographer, worthy of the subject, must do much which Mr. Taylor never thought of doing, and if he had, would not have been able to do.

The first biographer of Cowper, Hayley, was a man in no respect equal to the undertaking; but, by a fortunate accident, he adopted a plan similar to Mason's in his life of Gray, and thus acquired considerable reputation from the circumstance that so little of the work was his own. He was probably induced to take this course by the embarrassing nature of his subject. Having no taste or capacity for philosophical investigation, he did not venture to inquire into the causes of Cowper's literary success nor of his physical depression; and, knowing that his religious opinions, if expressed, were likely to give offence to some of Cowper's surviving friends, he seems to have been unwilling to provoke them to a conflict, in which his elegant literary repose would have been seriously endangered. There was also another reason for his reserve, which we cannot find it in our hearts to condemn. The details of mental suffering, when they oblige us to follow a man of fine genius to the cells of a madhouse, are painful and revolting. It was natural that he should wish to draw a veil over this dismal scene in the history of his excellent and honored friend: but this forbearance gave an incompleteness to his work, and its readers found many questions starting up in their minds to which it furnished no reply. As often happens in such cases of truths withheld, the imaginations to which it gave

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birth were worse than the worst reality. But it was necessary to say something, and nothing can be more misplaced than Hayley's attempt at explanation. He says, 'had Cowper been prosperous in early love, it is probable that he might have enjoyed a more uniform and happy tenor of health.' Here let us stop to say, that we learn only by intimation that Cowper was disappointed in love, not however by the insensibility of his mistress, but the interference of their relations. An event so important in the annals of his life, might surely have been described at large after the lapse of more than a generation. 'Thwarted in love,' says Hayley, 'the native fire of his temperament turned impetuously into the kindred channel of devotion. The smothered flames of desire, uniting with the vapors of constitutional melancholy and the fervency of religious zeal, produced altogether that irregularity of corporeal sensation and of mental health, which gave such extraordinary vicissitudes of splendor and darkness to his mortal career.' This explanation, for doubtless it was so intended, only serves to show the writer's perplexity, and when translated, means that Cowper's malady was owing in part to circumstances, in part to physical constitution, and in part to the habits of his mind. But Hayley does not seem to have been aware of the power of disease to destroy the moral energy: the mind, like the harp, when under firm command, gives out bold, expressive and inspiring sounds; if the moral energy be lost, it is like the harp of the winds, all sadness. But in criticising Hayley's work, we must not forget what does him more honor,—his generous kindness to Cowper; he was one of those matchless friends who remained faithful to the poor invalid, when even the Samaritan would have been tempted to pass by. Nothing in the endeavors and successes of genius can make our hearts burn within us like the self-devotion of those living martyrs, who, unseen by the world, can sit within the shadow of death with the sick and sorrowful, and count it their highest glory to bind up the broken heart.

We shall take advantage of this publication to make a few remarks on Cowper's life and character, and at the same time to express our hope that some one, who is equal to the undertaking, will accomplish that which Mr. Taylor has attempted in vain.

Cowper evidently had, in his constitution, the elements of that disorder, which made such fearful inroads upon the happi-

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ness of his life; and the circumstances of his childhood brought them into early action. His mother died when he was but six years old; and if we may believe the accounts we have respecting her, she would have had the judgment to detect and control the native tendencies of his feeling. It is not at all uncommon for the young, at a very early age, to be suspicious of kindness, jealous of affection, and to betray all those infirmities which, if not resisted, make their possessor, or rather their victim, a burden to himself, and useless to the world. But so slow and difficult is it to give a new direction to character which has already begun to take its form, that nothing less than a mother's affection has the long patience which it requires. What Cowper's father was, we do not know. His biographers only tell us that he was once chaplain to George II., and afterwards rector of Great Berkhamstead: as to his character we have no information beyond the fact, that he was a learned and respectable man. But whatever he may have been, he could not fulfil that delicate trust, which nature has confided to a mother's hands, nor does it appear that he secured to himself more than an ordinary place in the affection of his son. We do not remember in all his letters any particular allusion to his father, except where he speaks of the sorrow with which he felt that his death dissolved the relations that bound him to the place of his birth. Till his father's death, he had always considered their dwelling-place as a family possession: he had become intimate with every tree that grew near it; and it was with a bitter feeling that he gave it up to the stranger's hands.

Immediately after the death of his mother, which was of itself a sore calamity, he was sent by his father to a public school. Young, shy, and timid as he was, he shrunk back into himself, at witnessing the rough and savage manners of the older boys; and being unable to defend himself, and finding no defender, he was treated by them as lawful prey. Dr. Johnson said to a parent, who wished to overcome the retiring disposition of his child by sending him to a public school, that it was forcing an owl into the sun: a comparison more just than the Doctor himself imagined; for every one familiar with the woods knows, that whenever the owl is forced into the day, the painful glare of the sunshine is not the worst evil he endures. Every thing that has wings takes advantage of his helplessness, and torments him with insults and injuries, till he

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is weary of existence. The wonder is, that such discipline did not entirely break the gentle spirit of Cowper. He tells us that one young savage tortured him in such a manner, that he was afraid to lift his eyes upon him, higher than his knees: but he dared not complain, and this dire oppression was discovered by accident at last. Here his heart was confirmed in the habit of keeping to itself its own bitterness; an unfortunate reserve; for there were more instances than one, in which the counsel of a judicious friend, who could have entered into his feelings, would have been worth more to him than all the world besides. The consumptive patient, wasting in loneliness and sorrow, is not a sight more affecting to the thoughtful, than he whose moral energy is withered by disease of mind. But in the world at large, the sight inspires less sympathy than ridicule and scorn.

Though we shall not follow the example of Mr. Taylor, who has considered his subject only in a religious point of view, it would be impossible to speak of Cowper without regarding him in that relation. There must be a time in every man's life, we mean every good man, when he begins to act from principle; and Christians, of course, regard Christian principles as the rule, by which the conduct and feeling should be governed. It is the object of religious education to supply these principles to the young, and to teach them to act upon them; and nature points to the beginning of conscious existence as the time when these principles should be formed, requiring those who have given life to the child to teach him how to live,—to give him a right direction, so that, when he becomes responsible for himself, his tastes and habits may be already formed in favor of loving and doing that which is excellent, honorable and good. When the young mind has been so unfortunate as not to receive this early care, it is hard to supply the deficiency in later years. Still it can be done, and not unfrequently is done; and we take it that, when he who has lived at random begins decidedly to form the character of a Christian, and to govern himself by Christian principles in all that relates to himself, to others, and to God, he is said, in the dialect of our religion, to begin life anew, or in other words, passes through the conversion of the Gospel.

Now such is our condition, that energetic principles of action are absolutely necessary. The man without them can no more reach excellence, usefulness, and peace, either in this

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world, or another, than a vessel can drift to its destined harbor. The ship, which moves most rapidly and powerfully when under command, would drive most wildly, when left to the winds; and the man most largely gifted with passions and powers is dangerous to himself and others, in exact proportion to the success and glory with which he might exert himself in the way of duty. Cowper, unhappily, by the misfortune of his childhood, lost the benefit of a religious education, which might have formed principles, and taught him to act upon them: nor was there ever a time in the earlier history of his life, though he often lamented the defect, when he could summon energy enough to make himself what he wished to be. He felt that he was living without purpose; but as often as he attempted to break his habits and associations, he was like a man with a withered hand. His conscience perpetually haunted him, but it disturbed him like a dream; the moral energy to act was wanting. We do not believe that he was a profligate wretch, as he afterwards represents himself in his own confessions: we see more evidence of weakness and frailty than hardened guilt, in his course of life: but there certainly was enough to deplore in the loss of his earliest and best years, in which little was done, and that little not what it ought to have been.

That his conscience was always upbraiding him, appears from various incidents recorded by his own hand. His tastes were evidently in favor of what was right, but the force of circumstances was too strong for mere taste; and as for principles, as we have said, they never had been formed. The admonitions of his conscience, which seems to have had power to avenge though not to redress its own wrongs, were deeply felt at the time, but his unhealthy sensibility gave so much force to external things, that her warnings were lost, if not forgotten. Still they returned again and again: he endeavored to escape from them by joining in society with gay companions, but in vain. Even at that early period when he was at the public school, he tells us that one day, when sitting in solitude, he was forcibly struck with a passage of Scripture, which applied to the oppression under which he labored: it started up suddenly in his mind by some association which he could not discover, and he seems to have regarded it as a suggestion *made* to his soul. While he was at Westminster, happening to cross a churchyard late one evening, a sexton, who was dig-



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ging a grave by the light of a lantern, threw up a skull, which accidentally struck him upon the leg. This excited his conscience through his imagination; but he was, he tells us, 'as ignorant in all points of religion as the satchel at his back,' and though he regarded these as religious impulses, he did not know how to use them. Never having been taught to regard the subject in its true light, he seems to have considered these incidents as supernatural intimations, and to have condemned himself for neglecting them, as if they had been given by an articulate voice from on high.

This weakness and frailty, however, were owing principally to disease; for his taste and judgment were so decidedly in favor of what was right, that we can hardly account for the disturbing force which held him back from religious excellence and intellectual exertion, except by supposing that this secret infirmity weighed him to the dust. His diseased frame communicated its unhealthy action to the mind: and the mind, in turn, worn by perplexities, increased the disorder of the body; so that, although he was painfully conscious of the defects of his early education, he had not sufficient energy to repair them. But his mind naturally turned toward the subject of religion in times of sadness: it was like the fountain of Ammon, which, however cold by day, grew warmer as the shadows fell. Soon after he went to the Temple, a cloud of dejection settled heavily upon him. He met accidentally with Herbert, and some of the beautiful inspirations in which that writer threw off the restraints of the bad taste which prevailed, and followed his own taste and feeling, went to the heart of Cowper, and touched the string which was then silent, but was afterwards waked into deep and full vibration. He tells us distinctly, that it was the piety of that devout writer which gave him such a hold upon his mind. Inspired by the example, he attempted to secure the peace which religion alone could give: but not being aware that such peace is not to be found till the whole heart consents to this direction of the feeling, nor indeed till familiarity has made it easy and sweet, he gave over his attempts in despair, because he did not find at once the relief which he expected. As often as his mind attempted to rise, the strong hand of his disorder bound it down. He gives us a remarkable instance of this in his own narrative. At the time alluded to, he went into the country. While there, he walked one day to some distance from the village, and sat

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down in a retired spot, which commanded a noble prospect both of land and sea: the land-view was quiet and lovely, and the sun shone bright upon the sleeping ocean. Suddenly, as if a new sun had been kindled in the heavens, his soul was lighted up with joy, and filled with a glow of gratitude to the Power, to which he felt that he was indebted for this unexpected blessing. Unfortunately he returned to his old associations, and the benefit of this restoration was lost. The effect here described was precisely similar to what he tells us of his later periods of depression. He rose in the morning, he says, 'like an infernal frog out of Acheron, covered with the ooze and mud of melancholy;' but as the sun rose higher, his gloom gradually cleared up, its depth and duration depending upon the brightness of the day. In all this we see the misfortune of a man, whose heart longed to commune with the grand and beautiful works of nature, but was compelled to remain in the cells and caverns of the town,—who needed to associate with the contemplative and thoughtful, but was driven to the society of the busy or the gay,—who had a mind formed for poetical musing, but had not yet discovered where his strength lay,—whose soul was made for devotion, but never had been taught to rise; and who, in addition to all these unfavorable circumstances, was afflicted with a disorder, which palsies every faculty of body and spirit at the time when the man most needs exertions of power.

Situated as Cowper was, those difficulties, which in better times might have operated as springs to his active and powerful mind, became so many dead weights to him. Difficulties came thick and fast. His resources were so few and small, that an attachment, which, so far as we can discover from slight intimations, was returned by the object of his affection, was broken off by the friends of the parties: and not merely did this privation interfere with his happiness; he had the prospect of actual poverty before him. Affrighted at this vision, he eagerly grasped at the place of reading-clerk to the House of Lords, which a friend offered him, and forgot that the nervous shyness, which made a public exhibition of himself 'mortal poison,' would render it impossible for him ever to discharge its duties. The moment this difficulty occurred to him, it covered his mind with gloom. But he had not resolution to explain himself to his friend; and though they passed great part of every day together, it was only by letter that he could bring himself to pro-

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pose that this office should be exchanged for that of clerk of the journals, which required no public appearance, and was also in the gift of his patron. No sooner had he applied for the change as a personal favor, than his friend generously consented to it, though it disappointed his kind purpose and even, from particular circumstances, exposed his integrity to suspicion. Thus, where a single word would have saved him from much suffering, it was one which he had not strength to speak; and yet, hardly had his mind been set at rest on this subject, before it was called upon to make a similar but still greater exertion. For reasons, of which it is enough to say, that they were not personal, he was threatened with a public examination before the House, before he entered upon the duties. This made him completely wretched; he had not resolution to decline what he had not strength to do: the interest of his friend, and his own reputation and want of support, pressed him forward to an attempt, which he knew from the first could never succeed. In this miserable state, like Goldsmith's Traveller, 'to stop too fearful and too faint to go,' he attended every day for six months at the office where he was to examine the journals in preparation for his trust. His feelings were like those of a man at the place of execution, every time he entered the office door, and he only gazed mechanically upon the books, without drawing from them the least portion of the information which he wanted. A single letter to his cousin, Lady Hesketh, shows how helpless and hopeless was his condition; he had not strength to stand self-sustained, and he had not courage or confidence to reveal to his friends the torture which was wasting the living fibre of his heart. Perhaps those only, who have been in a condition in which the lightest touch is to the mind like sharp iron to the naked nerve, can sympathize with the heart-sick delicacy which prevented his making another appeal to the friend, who seems to have been actuated throughout simply by the wish to serve him. As the time drew nigh, his agony became more and more intense; he hoped and believed that madness would come to relieve him; he attempted also to make up his mind to commit suicide, though his conscience bore stern testimony against it; he could not by any argument persuade himself that it was right, but his desperation prevailed and he procured from an apothecary the means of self-destruction. On the day before his public appearance was to be made, he happened to notice a

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letter in the newspaper, which to his disordered mind seemed like a malignant libel on himself. He immediately threw down the paper and rushed into the fields, determined to die in a ditch, but the thought struck him that he might escape from the country. With the same violence he proceeded to make hasty preparations for his flight; but while he was engaged in packing his portmanteau his mind changed, and he threw himself into a coach, ordering the man to drive to the Tower wharf, intending to throw himself into the river, and not reflecting that it would be impossible to accomplish his purpose in that public spot. On approaching the water, he found a porter seated upon some goods: he then returned to the coach and was conveyed to his lodgings at the Temple. On the way, he attempted to drink the laudanum, but as often as he raised it, a convulsive agitation of his frame prevented its reaching his lips; and thus, regretting the loss of the opportunity, but unable to avail himself of it, he arrived, half-dead with anguish, at his apartment. He then shut the doors and threw himself upon the bed with the laudanum near him, trying to lash himself up to the deed: but a voice within seemed constantly to forbid it, and as often as he extended his hand to the poison, his fingers were contracted and held back by spasms. At this time some one of the inmates of the place came in, but he concealed his agitation, and as soon as he was left alone, a change came over him, and so detestable did the deed appear, that he threw away the laudanum and dashed the vial to pieces. The rest of the day was spent in heavy insensibility, and at night he slept as usual: but on waking at three in the morning, he took his pen-knife and lay with his weight upon it, the point towards his heart. It was broken and would not penetrate. At day-break he rose, and passing a strong garter round his neck, fastened it to the frame of his bed: this gave way with his weight, but on securing it to the door, he was more successful, and remained suspended till he had lost all consciousness of existence. After a time the garter broke and he fell to the floor, so that his life was saved: but the conflict had been greater than his reason could endure. He felt for himself a contempt not to be expressed or imagined; whenever he went into the street, it seemed as if every eye flashed upon him with indignation and scorn: he felt as if he had offended God so deeply, that his guilt could never be forgiven, and his whole heart was filled with tumultuous pangs of despair. Madness was not far off, or rather madness was already come.

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Here we must say that we entirely agree with those who contend, with more zeal it may be than the occasion calls for, that religion had no agency in any of its forms in causing his insanity. Those who have thrown out this suggestion seem to have done it as matter of inference merely; finding in him that despair of salvation, which they think that certain views of religion are fitted to produce, and knowing that he afterwards adopted those views of religion, they have taken it for granted, that this was the cause which produced depression at various periods, and once conducted him to the maniac's cell. But if they look into the history of his life, they will see that his depression took the same form before he embraced that religious system: he was then agitated by the same fears, lest he had committed the unpardonable sin, and destroyed all his hopes of immortality. And after he had become a convert to that faith, his mind, in its seasons of depression, was oppressed with fears which were in direct opposition to his religious convictions; for in health he believed himself accepted, but in depression he imagined that he was cast out in consequence of his neglecting to destroy himself on the former occasion. Surely it is needless to assign intellectual causes to such wild fancies as this. We are rather disposed to believe, that some such anchor to the soul as religion would have afforded, might have enabled him to outride the storm; for though his disorder was physical, the calm energy and sacred confidence which religion would have inspired, might have prevented it from affecting his mind so deeply; the concentrated purpose and quiet determination which religious principle gives to the mind, might have removed some of those perplexities by which the fever of his soul was exasperated to madness and despair. Of course we do not speak of the effect of the views of religion which he adopted: this is not the place to discuss the merits and influences of different systems. Each sect, by a natural habit of association, imagines that the water of life has most virtue when drawn from its own fountains, as wayfarers in the world think that the element is no where else so sweet and reviving, as that of their father's well. Any one who reads Cowper's letters, will see that his religion was pure and undefiled by the spirit of any party. In fact we know not where to find a finer exhibition of the beauty of holiness, than in the life of this remarkable man. Hardier spirits could doubtless accomplish more in the warfare and struggle

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of the world; and feeling that he was physically disabled for such a service, he retired from the public ways of men. But those who suppose him to have been a recluse, are entirely mistaken in his character. He was ready to enter into society and contribute to its employments, when disease did not prevent him: and so far from cherishing a spirit of devotion like the shew-bread of the temple, which was a formal offering to Heaven, his religion was always carried out into useful and benevolent action. He was familiar in the cottages of the poor, where he gave comfort, counsel, and such relief as his slender means would allow. He seems to have been employed by Thornton, the well-known philanthropist, who considered him as a judicious and faithful dispenser of his bounty to the destitute, and who would not have entrusted it to incompetent hands. This is in our view the very spirit of religion. That messenger of Heaven dwells not in cells nor cloisters; she goes forth among men not to frown upon their happiness, but to do them good; she is familiar and cheerful at the tables and firesides of the happy; she is equally intimate in the dwellings of poverty and sorrow, where she encourages the innocent smiles of youth, and kindles a glow of serenity on the venerable front of age; she is found too, at the bedside of the sick, when the attendants have ceased from their labor, and the heart is almost still; she is seen in the house of mourning, pointing upward to the house not made with hands; she will not retire so long as there is evil that can be prevented, or kindness that can be given, and it is not till the last active duty is done, that she hastens away and raises her altar in the wilderness, so that she may not be seen by men.

There never was a spirit more evidently made for religious excellence than that of Cowper; through all that early period of life, of which he speaks in such exaggerated but natural terms of condemnation, his conscience was, as we have seen, always upbraiding him with the infirmity of purpose which made his best resolutions vain. In times of distress, too, he seems like a ship-wrecked man, constantly trying to cling to the rock of ages, but as often as he seemed to grasp it, sinking down from his hold with the returning waves. But while the tendencies of his feeling were naturally favorable to religion, it seems probable that they must have received a direction in his early childhood. Many deep and lasting impressions in favor of religion may be made by a mother's affection, before she is aware that

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the young heart is open to receive them: and if the parent be early lost, as in the case of Cowper, the heart will be conscious of the impressions, without being conscious whence they proceed. Certainly his recollections of her were strong and vivid, as will be seen by those who read his sweet and affecting lines upon his mother's picture; and it is not to be supposed that a parent, so tender and faithful, would have been inattentive to the most sacred of all her duties.

The complaint under which Cowper labored throughout his life was *hypochondriasis*, or, as Dr. Rush prefers calling it, *tristimania*, a disorder, not, as is idly supposed, originating in the imagination, though it employs perverted fancies as its chief instruments of torture. Cowper was aware of this; for he says to Lady Hesketh, 'could I be translated to Paradise, unless I could leave my body behind me, my melancholy would cleave to me there.' His disease was dyspeptic habit, which gave a morbid sensibility to his body and mind, and placed him in that state which predisposes to insanity. The conscience shares in the general excitement; there has been an instance in this country of a young man who died insane from the belief that he had offended his Maker, by not saying grace at the table of a friend; and the experience of physicians supplies them with many cases, bearing a near resemblance to that of Cowper. The disease is not without its remissions; we see in his letters, written at the times when his melancholy disqualified him for society and exertion, occasional flashes of humor, which seem strangely at variance with the accounts of his biographers; but it was the fact, as he says, that sometimes, while he was the most distressed of all beings, he was cheerful upon paper. But as the disease gains ground, even these gleams of happiness vanish; all becomes dreary, comfortless and cold; there is no beauty in nature; its sights and sounds become painful and disgusting; there is no brightness in the sun; however brilliantly it lights up the world, it cannot shine inward to the heart. Kindness, friendship and affection all lose their power; their attentions are accepted without seeming gratitude or pleasure; even the voice of religious consolation speaks as hopelessly, as if it were addressed to the dead. The anguish arising from this constant depression is so intolerable, that it often drowns all sensation of the most intense bodily pain. Sometimes the sufferer prays for madness, like King Lear, hoping in that way to be relieved from the agony of thought; it would seem as if there could be no

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darker change beyond this; but it is, if possible, worse, when it settles down into the frozen calm of despair. Here, there is often a conflict between the wish and the fear to die. The sufferer longs for death as a hidden treasure, and would welcome it from the hand of another, but dares not inflict it with his own. Sometimes the hatred of life prevails, and he resorts to poison, the pistol, or the halter. Such is, in general terms, the description given of hypochondria by those whose profession makes them familiar with it; and almost every one of these signs and sufferings is found in the history of Cowper.

It would have been surprising if a heart like his, after being tormented for months by such a disease, should not have overflowed with gratitude and praise as soon as light broke in upon the darkness of his soul. For we have seen that this was the case on a former occasion, when the veil of darkness was suddenly lifted; but at this period, when he felt that he was sinking into an insanity which might last as long as life, and was grasping at every thing that afforded the faintest hope of relief, his attention was turned to the subject of Christianity. His mind fastened itself upon that subject; it was his prevailing imagination while he was ill, though of course perverted by the wildness natural to his disease, and was the idea uppermost in his mind when he began to recover. And now, being separated from his old associations, and placed in a situation favorable to the indulgence of his religious feelings, where the influences about him were all auspicious, and no uncongenial pursuits and temptations were present to distract his mind, he studied the subject of Christianity, and applied it to his life and feeling, till his whole heart became a living sacrifice of grateful praise. Nor is it strange, that the particular aspect in which the subject was presented to him when it first engaged his earnest attention, should have been dear to him ever after; but if any think of him as the slave to a system, they will find, on reading his letters, that he did not take offence at the sentiments of others, and was content with holding fast his own. There was not in his whole composition one particle of the material of which bigots are made. Interested, ardent and zealous no doubt he was, but his zeal, instead of blazing out against others, rose upward in a clear bright flame, which, wherever it shone before men, could have no other effect than to attract them onward in the strait and narrow path of duty.

Some of the evangelical friends of Cowper, considering the



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honor of their views of religion deeply involved in the discussion of this subject, have entered largely into an investigation of this curious page in the history of human nature. They have endeavored to draw the limits between religious concern and the terrors of a disturbed imagination; they allow that his religious anxiety might have had a tendency to increase his disorder for the time, but so far as his unhappiness was of a religious nature, he was wounded only that he might be more effectually healed. A sensible writer on the subject, in the Eclectic Review, allowed 'the extreme difficulty of determining, in all cases, the true character of those alternations of joy and despondency, of levity and seriousness, naturally enough connected with correspondent frames of thought, to which his narrative continually refers.' 'In cases where the sympathy between the body and the mind is peculiarly exquisite; where the slightest change in the temperament of the frame communicates itself to the imagination and the feelings, and the breath and pulsation seem in return to be regulated by the thoughts, it is almost impossible to depend upon a person's own account of the origin of his emotions. There can be no doubt, that the presence of fever is the real cause of much that passes for religious transport in the prospect of dissolution, and that despondency is not less frequently the mere effect of the bodily languor, consequent upon the exhaustion.' But he contends that these emotions, though they may originate in physical changes, are not to be viewed as physical phenomena; impressions may be made in dreams which are true; and convictions may come over the mind in sickness, which are not the less just because partly attributable to the state of the system. The way to ascertain whether they are delusive or not, is to learn whether there is any ground for them; meaning, we suppose, that the question is, whether the mind creates unnatural or only exaggerates natural emotions. His inference, if we understand him, is that Cowper was an example of the latter state of mind; and of course, that disordered as he was, he may be considered as a moral agent, and his conversion quoted as a genuine instance of the effect of the influences of religion.

One would think, however, that admitting the justness of this distinction, it would be unsafe and undesirable to present a mind, which has lost the power of judging and comparing, as an illustration of the effect of religion upon a healthy under-

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standing. When the man in delirium sees spectres about him, it will not do to point out objects in the chamber, which his mind distorts and enlarges into shapes of terror; they may furnish a starting-point for the imagination, but they will not prove that the patient's observations are any more to be trusted. The person who neglected to say grace at table, in his own view of the subject did wrong; and so far he had some ground for self-reproach; but would the fancy, which dwelt upon this omission with such excessive remorse, have found any difficulty in creating causes of self-condemnation? And would any one trust the judgment of such a man, more than that of another, who was in the same state, without any actual cause for self-upbraiding? Neither will it do to say, that the subject of religion is infinite, and that no amount of devotion to the subject can therefore be excessive. This will be readily admitted by all, if by religion we understand religious duty. The question is, whether there is no such thing as excessive remorse for neglect of some particular obligation. On the whole, we think, that the friend of religion, instead of endeavoring to find order in the confusion which prevailed at that time in Cowper's mind, will consult the honor of Christianity more, by pointing to the healthy action of his powerful intellect and the daily beauty of his unclouded life, as a fine and attractive example of the spirit and power of religion. His regret for lost and wasted years, was best manifested by the earnestness with which he redeemed the rest; his gratitude for the divine goodness, which restored him from suffering, was displayed by his beginning life anew. These facts are undoubted; and they afford volumes of testimony in favor of Christian truth.

When Cowper, at the age of thirty-three, had recovered so far as to be able to leave the care of the physician, and retreat into the country, he became acquainted with the family of Unwin, to which he was indebted for so much of the comfort of his later years. Wherever he felt at ease, his manners were said to be singularly attractive: and this family seem to have had a simplicity and warm-hearted kindness, which offered him precisely the social resources which he wanted, besides having the advantage of being able to sympathize with him in all his religious feelings. After residing with them two years, the circumstances of the family were changed by the death of Mr. Unwin, and, at the suggestion of Mr. Newton, they went to reside near him in Olney, the scene of his pastoral labors. In

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Mrs. Unwin, a woman of intelligence as well as excellence, who was seven years older than himself, he found a counsellor as well as friend, who was so much interested in his welfare, that after her children, who were both of mature years, left her, she made it her duty and pleasure to devote her life to him. Beside the all-engrossing subject of which his heart was full, he spent his time in exercise, conversation, and music, in which he always delighted. It does not appear that he engaged seriously in writing any thing more than the Olney hymns, which he undertook in conjunction with his friend Mr. Newton: but as he wrote with great facility, these were trifles which made but small demands upon his mind. By external circumstances he was little troubled, with the exception of the loss of his brother, a learned and excellent member of the University, whose death he deeply deplored; but he found consolation for sorrows like this more easily than for the perplexing evils of the world, and this will not furnish us with a reason for his relapsing into gloom. Hayley ascribed it to his excessive religious feeling, not discriminating between the feeling itself and the means which he took to cherish it. In true religious feeling there can be no excess; since the feeling, as it grows, will spend itself in works of active duty; but in his religious exercises, possibly there may have been a cause for his returning disorder. Such at least is the explanation given by one of his evangelical friends, who says, 'that a considerable portion of his time was given to devotional exercises must be acknowledged; but that devotion, which does not issue in action, partakes too much of the religion of the cloister to have the effect of keeping the mind long in a healthy state. The right use of time is a very important division of Christian duty; and here we cannot help thinking that Cowper failed. Devotional exercises, instead of being used to prepare and strengthen the mind for the active duties of life, were suffered in a great measure to supply their place; and not only was the opportunity thus lost of benefiting mankind by labors which would have proved their own reward, even in the peace and satisfaction which they imparted to his own bosom; but the natural timidity and feminine softness of his character must have been increased by his almost total seclusion from the world.'* These are sensible remarks, and contain much truth with respect to Cowper: but his seclusion was enforced by a disposition which

* Christian Observer, 1805.

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made it almost impossible for him to go forth in search of friends, though he always welcomed those who sought him; and it must be remembered also, that religious feeling was the principal employment and happiness of his mind; it was not as if he had retreated from a world where he might have been useful. He had found himself wholly unable to contend in the race with the swift, and in battle with the strong; neither was his life so inactive as is often supposed. Far from sinking into a dead calm of quietism, he went about doing good, and never mistook the verdure of stagnation for living green.

But though Cowper may have been in error in giving, not too much of his feeling, but too much of his time to religion, this period of his life seems to have been more tranquil and serene than any other. There are not many letters, but those are on the subject nearest his heart, and are written in a cheerful spirit, which seems to show that there was nothing morbid in his devotion. There is nothing in the least presumptuous or intrusive in his manner: he speaks of himself in terms of unfeigned humility, stating his own sentiments with manly freedom, but never complaining of others because their feelings did not keep pace with his own. This way of life seems much more favorable to the health of his mind, than the more brilliant period when he stood out before the gaze of men: for however much he endeavored to guard himself against excessive sensibility to the world's opinion, it is manifestly impossible that any man should be indifferent to censure or praise, and he of all mankind was least likely to present a breast of steel to the critic's blow. He succeeded much better in guarding himself against the temptations of flattery, than against the depressing effect of censure. His letters betray the consternation with which he looked for the critical sentence of Johnson, and the almost bodily fear in which he waited for the signal from the Doctor's heavy gun, which should give notice whether the poet was to live or die. He was delighted with a line from Franklin, which, though it betrayed no great poetic enthusiasm, showed that he had discernment to see the substantial excellence of the new candidate for fame. Throughout Cowper's life, he seems to have been deeply wounded by neglect and scorn, whether as a poet or a man. When he first went to Huntingdon as an invalid stranger, some one had spoken of him as 'that fellow Cowper;' and he does not disguise the satisfaction which it gave him to prove that he

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was by birthright a gentleman. He never was reconciled to the neglect which he experienced at the hands of Thurlow, who was once his intimate friend. He had once playfully engaged to provide for Cowper if he ever had the power; but when he became Lord Chancellor,he followed the example of Pharaoh's chief butler, a person who has found more imitators than most others recorded in the Scripture. It was not to be expected, that a coarse and somewhat savage individual like Thurlow, could sympathize much with one so gentle and refined; nor would it have been easy to provide for him except by a pension; but all that Cowper wished from him was an assurance that he was not forgotten, and it is a disgrace to Thurlow that this small measure of attention to his feelings was never paid.

After eight years of health, in the year 1773 Cowper's depression returned, and soon deepened into an impenetrable gloom. No enjoyments, no cares nor duties could find the least access to his mind; he did not show the least interest in the society of his friends, nor gratitude for their kindness, though they were unwearied in their exertions to rescue him from his distress. Mr. Newton, though he was sometimes injudicious in his treatment of Cowper, proved himself a faithful friend on this occasion; and Mrs. Unwin attended him with a kindness and self-devotion, which were requited by his lasting gratitude and affection. But nothing would avail; he remained in a state of helpless despondency for five years, all the while in utter despair of salvation; and when he began to recover, it was five years more before he regained sufficient firmness to throw off his anxiety, and return to the world again. It was at this period, that he helped forward his restoration by taking care of the tame hares which he has made so celebrated. The narrative in which he describes them was first published in the Gentleman's Magazine, and has since been found in almost every edition of his works, where it always has been, and always will be a favorite page to lovers of nature.

When he was so far restored as to be able to write, Mrs. Unwin, with a judgment which does her honor, urged him to employ his mind upon poetical subjects; and as this had always been a favorite pursuit, without his being aware of the richness and variety of his powers, he was easily induced to make the exertion. He made a beginning early in life, and one or two specimens, preserved by Hayley, show the same vigor of

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thought and expression, which distinguish his later writings. Table Talk was the earliest of the pieces which compose his first volume, and the rest were written at the suggestions of friends, on subjects which happened to strike his imagination. Original and powerful as these poems were, they were very slow in winning their way to the public favor; the sale was far from rapid, and the critical verdicts of literary tribunals did not tend to increase their circulation. One of the reviews declared, that they were evidently the production of a very pious gentleman, without one spark of genius. But considering all circumstances, this was not surprising; the versification of the day was such as Pope had left it, and ears accustomed to the even flow of his numbers were startled by the bolder grace of Cowper's lines; it seemed like absurd presumption, in one unknown to fame, to step so widely from the beaten path; and, as every one knows, literary independence is not easily forgiven. Then, too, the preface by Mr. Newton was of a nature to alarm light readers: it was written with more solemnity than was called for by the occasion; he does not seem to have admired the play of Cowper's humor, though it was one of his most remarkable powers; the poet studiously apologizes for it in his letters to Newton, assuring him that it was introduced in order to gain a hearing from the thoughtless, on the same principle that induces parents, in giving physic to their children, to touch the brim of the cup with honey. This language is one of those instances of bad taste, of which Cowper was not often guilty. It must be manifest to every one, that he indulged his humor simply because he could not help it. It was much more natural to him to give way to this sportive wit, than to launch anathemas at the head of Charles Wesley, for amusing himself with sacred music on Sunday evening, and was at least as likely to have a good effect upon the world. The tone of severity with which he cannonades follies and sins alike, does not seem like Cowper's choice, but has the appearance of being borrowed from some one who exerted a powerful influence over him. It is in direct opposition to sentiments which he sometimes expresses, particularly in a letter where he disapproves a certain clergyman's preaching, or rather his constant endeavor to scold men out of their sins. He says 'the heart, corrupt as it is, and because it is so, grows angry if it be not treated with good manners, and scolds again. There is no grace, that the spirit of

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self can counterfeit more successfully than a religious zeal.' 'A man that loves me, if he sees me in an error, will pity me, and calmly endeavor to convince me of it, and persuade me to forsake it: if he has great and good news to tell me, he will not do it angrily, nor in heat and discomposure of spirit.' We fear that Cowper was guilty of some violations of his own excellent rule, and he was ready afterwards to acknowledge it: when a friend applied the phrase 'multa cum bile' to the tone of those poems, he confessed that in some respects it was just. All this only serves to prove what was forcibly stated by an old English divine, that religious zeal, though a sweet Christian grace no doubt, is 'exceedingly apt to sour.'

Though the immediate success of his first volume was not great, it was sufficient to encourage one who never had a very exalted opinion of his own powers; and having at this time a new and animated companion, Lady Austen, who had much influence over him, and used it to induce him to write, he commenced a new poem, The Task, which was completed and given to the world in 1785. This work was at once successful, and placed him at the head of all the poets of the day. But all the while that he was thus fortunate in gaining reputation, he was a prey to his constitutional melancholy, believing himself unfit to engage in religious exercises, and entirely cut off from the hope of salvation. A domestic incident, too, tended to destroy the happiness which he might have received from his literary fame. He was obliged to give up the society of Lady Austen, in deference to the feelings of Mrs. Unwin, who felt herself eclipsed by this new companion. Mrs. Unwin has been generally condemned for this jealousy, as if it proceeded from a narrow mind; but there are several circumstances to be taken into view. It does not appear, that she ever complained of the ascendency of Lady Austen. Cowper perceived that she was dispirited, and for this there was sufficient reason. She felt that she was the person on whose care and kindness he had leaned for years. She had devoted her life to secure the happiness of his; and in his seasons of melancholy he had required a self-devotion to his welfare, which very few were able or willing to give. While she had done all this for him, Lady Austen had only amused him, and it was not in human nature to behold the interest, to which she was entitled by years of hardship, thus transferred to a more entertaining companion, without regret. Cowper knew that there was

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cause for her uneasiness, and at once made the sacrifice which he felt was her due. The loss was soon after supplied by Lady Hesketh, his cousin, said to have been a woman of fine understanding and remarkable social powers, who was often an inmate in the same household, and faithful to him till the last. Soon after his renewal of personal intercourse with her, and about a year after the separation from Lady Austen, he went to reside at Weston, at the instance of the Throckmortons, a wealthy family, who spent the summer in that village. It was time to leave Olney, if we may judge from reports circulated concerning them, which accused them of fashionable dissipation. These foolish reports reached Mr. Newton in London, and he, with a singular want of good sense, transmitted them to Cowper; and this, at the time when the poor invalid was 'miserable,' as he himself says, 'on account of God's departure from him, which he believed to be final, and was seeking his return, in the path of duty and by continual prayer.' The Throckmortons were Catholics, and his intercourse with them, which began while he was still in Olney, might have occasioned this rumor to his disadvantage. Cowper was above those miserable prejudices against other sects and sentiments, which are sometimes inculcated as a duty. Speaking of a gentleman, who had been recommended to him by one of his friends, he says, 'As to his religion, I leave it,—I am neither his bishop nor his confessor. A man of his character, and recommended by you, would be welcome here, were he a Mahometan or Gentoo.' We consider it among the best proofs of the elevation of his character, that while he never attempted to conciliate public favor by softening down his most unpopular opinions, and even considered silence as a sort of treason to the King of kings, he proved that this rigid faithfulness arose from conviction, not from passion, by allowing others to declare their sentiments as freely as he expressed his own.

His literary undertakings, thus far, had not been of a kind which exacted severe labor; they were sufficient to engage and interest, but not to tax and exhaust his mind. But when he found the benefit of being employed, he seems to have thought, that it would be well to put himself under a necessity for exertion; he therefore undertook the gigantic enterprise of translating Homer, and thus, in avoiding the danger of doing too little, ran headlong into the danger of doing too much. He thought, like the rest of the world, that Pope had not succeeded;



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but he ascribed his failure to his moving in the fetters of rhyme; and it does not seem to have occurred to him, that no translation, however exact and worthy of the original, could ever equal the demands of scholars or the imaginations of the unlearned. This enterprise was not fortunate in any point of view. It rather wearied than employed him; it added nothing to his literary fame, and when it was completed it left a vacancy of mind, in which, having neither strength for labor nor power to live without it, he was open at once to the attacks of his depression. These were deferred for a time by various literary plans which he formed; but in 1794, the cloud settled upon his mind, and it remained in eclipse to the last.

The fact seems to have been, that the distinction which his genius gave him, though it was in some respects gratifying, was not favorable to the health of his mind. Though no man was less vain or assuming, he was very much annoyed by the critical remarks to which he was constantly exposed. His eminence also made him a subject of public curiosity, which, however flattering, was necessarily oppressive to his retiring disposition. The friends of his later years do not appear to have sympathized with him in his peculiar views of religion. The subject disappears from his letters, and though it never lost its hold upon his mind, still, if those about him had no feelings in common with his, he would not force it upon them, and therefore folded it up in the depths of his own heart. But since he needed free conversation with judicious friends to correct his own diseased imaginations, it is evident that the water of life itself, like the material element in a sealed fountain, might generate an atmosphere fatal to light and life. His history, throughout his life, cannot be contemplated without deep feelings of pity for his misfortunes, and admiration of his moral excellence and intellectual power. But that history is yet to be written. In all cultivated minds it still excites an unabated interest, and should it fall into the hands of one sufficiently enlarged and enlightened to do justice to it, he will find an ample reward for his labors. Mr. Taylor, as we have said, is not the man; nor is his work such as will stand in the way of a better.

As a poet, Cowper was a man of great genius, and in a day when poetry was more read than at present, enjoyed a popularity almost unexampled. The strain of his writing was familiar even to homeliness. He drew from his own resources

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only; throwing off all affectation and reserve, he made his reader acquainted with all his sentiments and feelings, and did not disguise his weaknesses and sorrows. There is always something attractive in this personal strain where it does not amount to egotism, and he thus gained many admirers, who never would have been interested by poetry alone. The religious character of his writings was also a recommendation to many, beside those who favored views of that subject similar to his own. There were those who felt, like Burns, that 'bating some scraps of Calvinistic divinity, the Task was a noble poem.' There was a wide sympathy, a generous regard for all the human race expressed in it, which gave his readers a respect for his heart. Then, too, his views of nature were drawn from personal observation; all his readers could remember or at any time see those which precisely resembled the subjects of his description. He associated no unusual trains of thought, no feelings of peculiar refinement, with the grand and beautiful of nature, while at the same time the strain of his sentiment was pure, manly and exalted. By addressing himself to the heart universal, and using language such as could be understood by the humble as well as the high, he influenced a wider circle than any poet who went before him; and by inspiring a feeling of intimacy, a kind of domestic confidence in his readers, he made his works 'household words,' and all who shared his feelings became interested in his fame.

We have already alluded to the success of his earlier poems, and explained the reasons, why it was so small. But his change in the style of English versification, though it seemed wild and lawless at the time, was a great improvement upon his predecessors. There was an artificial elegance in the measure of Pope, which, however pleasing to the musical ear, was a restraint upon the flow of sentiment, and sometimes wearied with its sweetness. Cowper's bold freedom, though it seemed at first like uncouth roughness, gained much in variety of expression, without losing much in point of sound. It offended, because it seemed careless, and as if he respected little the prevailing taste of his readers: but it was far from being unpolished as it seemed. He tells us, that the lines of his earlier poems were touched and retouched, with fastidious delicacy: his ear was not easily pleased; and yet, if we may judge from one or two specimens of alterations, his corrections very often injured what they were meant to repair. As to

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the kind of zeal, which abounded in those poems, and which, as we have said, was one obstacle to their success, it was not the earnestness which gave offence, so much as the manner in which it was displayed. And it is true, that fierce and angry sarcasm is a very injudicious way of expressing generous emotions. We see very little of it in the letters of Cowper, where he pours out his soul without reserve, and we hardly know how to account for his adopting it in those poems. But whatever his motive may have been, the public could not be persuaded that bitterness was any proof of deep conviction; or that those, who were most severe upon offences and offenders, were the most likely to attempt their reform. We occasionally witness similar displays of feeling, and it is easy to see that, while they are hailed with acclamations by all who agree in opinion with the writer, they are offensive and disgusting to those whose hearts it is most important to reach. It was truly said of these poems, in the words of the younger Pliny, translated, 'many passages are delicate, many sublime, many beautiful, many tender, many sweet, many acrimonious.' 'Yes, yes,' said Cowper, 'the latter part is very true indeed; there are many acrimonious.' The truth was probably, that, as often happens in men of retired habits, his words outran his feelings.

Those of the earlier poems which are written in this spirit, are quite inferior to the others. *Expostulation*, which treats the sins of his country in a solemn tone of remonstrance and warning, is an admirable poem; it breathes a spirit resembling that of one of the ancient prophets,—grave, dignified and stern. Its sound is that of a trumpet blown to warn the people,—a sound, which wakes no angry passion, but before which the heart stands still and listens with a shuddering chill of dread. *Conversation* is next in excellence; it is written in a fine strain of humor, not with the 'droll sobriety' of Swift, nor the grave irony of Fielding, but with a wit peculiarly his own, such as makes his letters the best English specimen of that kind of writing, and at times affords a singular contrast with his gloom. We fancy that the fate of these poems was described in a letter from Dr. Cogswell, of Hartford, in this country, who opened a correspondence with Cowper. He tells the poet that it was his pleasure, at reading the Task, which induced him to inquire for these earlier poems, and that he had read them with equal delight. Cowper expresses his satisfaction at this com-

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pliment, in a manner which showed that he himself esteemed them among the very best of his writings, but was conscious that his opinion was not that of the reading world.

The Task is a work of more pretension than his other writings, we mean in its form: for it has no singleness of subject, and is in fact a collection of poems, in each of which the topic which affords the name serves only as a text, to which the images and sentiments of the writer are attached by the most capricious and accidental associations. One advantage of this freedom is, that it affords an agreeable variety; it excludes nothing above or beneath the moon; it requires no unity of thought, or manner, and permits the poet to pass from the serious to the playful, at his pleasure, without formal apology or preparation. Cowper certainly availed himself of the privilege, and made his readers acquainted with all his feelings, circumstances, and opinions, affording a curious example of a man, reserved to excess in social life, and almost erring on the side of frankness in his writings, if we can possibly call that frankness excessive, which simply tells what all the world was burning to know. For we must consider that his previous works had made him known sufficiently to gain him the reputation of a genius, at a time when such stars were not common in the British sky. He made his first appearance, too, in the maturity of his years and powers,—no one had beheld his rising,—no one had marked him till he suddenly emerged from the cloud. There was a natural desire to know who and what he was,—and all such questions were answered in the poem, in a manner which rendered his readers familiar with his powerful mind and amiable heart. They found much to respect in the vigor of his understanding, which refused to be enslaved by inherited prejudices, and manifested every where a manly love of freedom and of truth: nor could any one help admiring his singleness of heart, and the openness with which he declared its emotions. The effect of the work was greater than can now be imagined: it conducted many to the pure fountains of happiness which are found by those who commune with nature, and many to those sources of religious peace, which keep on flowing when all earthly springs are dry. It tended to make man feel an interest in man, and opened the eyes of thousands to those traditional abuses, which are detested as soon as the attention of the world is directed full upon them: and in a literary point of view, it gladdened the

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hearts of all who felt an interest in English poetry, by reviving its old glories at the moment when the last beam of inspiration seemed to have faded from the sky.

Those who take their impression of Cowper's translation of Homer from tradition, may perhaps think it an entire failure. A failure the critical world has pronounced it: but it may be well to inquire, whether it would be possible to satisfy the public expectation; and whether any one could possibly have succeeded better? We think it evident that the failure arose from the nature of the undertaking: it was an attempt to convey an idea to English readers of writings which are called inimitable, and therefore untranslatable. There is something undefined and obscurely great in the idea which the world has of the Homeric inspiration; and unless the translator could give his work the same antiquity, and surround it with the same glory of classical associations, it might present a perfect image of the simple greatness of the original, without awakening any similar feeling. An English Homer,—a Homer of the eighteenth century, was condemned beforehand. Every critic could feel safe in pronouncing it wholly unworthy of the original; and the public, discouraged by their blind guides, felt no interest in proceeding to inquire whether their judgment was just. Had they expected anything like what they were likely to find; had they exacted nothing more than talent and industry were able to do,—had they, in a word, looked for a translation, instead of a new original, their reasonable expectations would have been fully answered. We recommend to our readers, who feel an interest in the reputation of Cowper, and lament his failure in this great undertaking, to consider what they may reasonably look for, and having thus given some distinctness to their views, to read the work. This will be doing justice to the translator, and, if we may trust our own experience, they will find their candor amply repaid. At the same time, we do not think Cowper's versification remarkably happy. It was wrought with infinite pains, and corrected and revised, till the music satisfied his ear: but in the Task, and in the Translation, he pleases more by expressive and eloquent language, than by any peculiar sweetness in the sound. But whatever gratification the work may afford, will be counterbalanced by the reflection, that it consumed time and labor that might have been better spent upon original writings: these would have been far less ex-

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hausting to his mind and spirits, while they brought infinitely greater returns of fame.

Many of Cowper's smaller pieces, in which he followed the suggestions of his own feelings without waiting for others to prescribe his subject, and urge him to write, are among the most beautiful exhibitions of his power. The lines addressed to Mary, his faithful and devoted friend, who made so generous a sacrifice of all other enjoyments to the single one of securing his comfort, of guarding him against the assaults of disease, and sustaining him when the blow had fallen, are one of the most affecting tributes which genius ever paid to virtue. And the lines addressed to his mother, on receiving her picture from a friend, are equally touching and sweet. Nothing could exceed the sacredness, with which every thing connected with her was treasured in the sanctuary of his soul; early as he lost her guidance, he had felt the loss in after life as the beginning of all his sorrows; he had felt as if, had Providence spared her a little longer, she might have given a direction to his feelings, that would have saved him from some of those trials which had almost broken his heart; she was the angel of his visions,—the bright spirit which always stood before him in his imaginations of Heaven. He remembered her as young, beautiful, and holding a relation to him which inspired the deepest reverence and affection. So firmly was her image set in his remembrance, that not a day ever passed without his thinking of her, and calling up those recollections of his childhood, connected with her, which no time could wear away; and now, when he stands in the valley of departing years, and on looking back sees the light of the sun, which is set to him, still shining on the hills of youth, from which he came down so long ago, he writes with a sensibility and pathetic earnestness, which fills every heart with sympathy, and we had almost said, every eye with tears.

But in these days, when living poets are but little read, and the dead 'forgotten lie,' we are taking up more time than many of our readers will think necessary, in speaking of the life and genius of Cowper. But he claims our notice, as a man remarkable both for his intellectual history and power, the former being extraordinary almost without example, and the latter such as is not often exceeded. As respects an interest in poetry, also, we live in such times as usually follow a period of great intellectual excitement,—times, when the pub-

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lic taste grows indifferent, and gentle harps are struck altogether in vain. We want some one to come forward in the spirit and power of Cowper, who shall speak in a voice which shall compel the world to listen,—and in a voice too, which religion and virtue, as well as literary taste, can hear with applause. We are confident that such an one will appear; whatever may be said of new directions given to the mind in this self-complacent age, so long as the mind exists, it will treasure poetry as an art which does much to exalt it; there never will be a time when cultivated minds will cast this pearl away. It may be valued at some periods more than at others: it may be less regarded now, than it has been in former times; but these are only transient and passing changes; it will survive them all, and will last as long as the world endures.

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ART. II.—*Decandolle's Botany.*

1. *Théorie Elémentaire de la Botanique, ou Exposition des Principes de la Classification naturelle*, &c. Par M. A. P. DECANDOLLE. Seconde Edition, revue et augmentée. Paris. 1819.
2. *A Grammar of Botany, illustrative of artificial, as well as natural Classification, with an explanation of Jussieu's system.* By Sir JAMES EDWARD SMITH, H. D. President of the Linnæan Society, &c. London and New York. 1822.
3. *Introduction to the Natural System of Botany: or a systematic View of the Organization, Natural Affinities, and Geographical Distribution of the whole Vegetable Kingdom.* By JOHN LINDLEY, F. R. S., L. S., G. S., Professor of Botany in the University of London, &c. First American Edition, with an Appendix. By JOHN TORREY, M. D. New York. 1831.

THE botanical student, who has rambled over mountain and marsh, with a box under his arm, and a bundle of grass or a shrub in his hands, must have been conscious how like one demented he often appeared to the unlettered rustics; and while the query, so invariably put to him, '*What is that good for?*' received no satisfactory reply, how plainly their looks,

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more expressive than language, told him, that he had better stop gathering good-for-nothing weeds, and take to some honest and profitable employment. This thing is too common to be wondered at, and is moreover easily enough explained on the ground of ignorance of any end or object in science, save that of the most direct practical utility. But how is it to be accounted for that men, whose education and intelligence, we should suppose, must have carried them beyond such unworthy views of the nature of science, too often entertain notions respecting botany, as confused and mean as those of the most uncultivated mind? Why is it, that they can look on the plants of the field, clothed in the rich garniture of a summer month,—in spite of the beauty that allures their gaze, and the admirable arrangement of organs, whereby the whole economy of vegetation is maintained,—without receiving any uncommon ideas of wisdom or power, and perhaps turn away from them all, as unworthy of a passing notice? Why is it that they can hear of the labors of botanists, of their travels by sea and land, amid suffering and privation, with no other effect, perhaps, than to call up more vividly to their imagination the picture of Obed Battius, or some other equally miserable caricature of enthusiastic devotion to a favorite science?

The truth, indeed, is too obvious to be questioned, that botany does not bear that character of dignity and importance in the public view, which has long since been obtained by many other of the natural sciences. This may be sufficiently explained,—at least, we know nothing else that can explain it,—by the single fact, that very little has been done by its friends towards introducing to general attention the more elevated and philosophical portions of the science,—those only that can make it respectable with thinking and well educated minds. When a person lights upon a botanical book, and finds it,—as nineteen times out of twenty he will find it,—a catalogue of hard names, followed by still harder descriptions in an unknown tongue, or it may be designed for juvenile minds, and of course presenting nothing to him very striking in point of novelty or importance, it is not to be wondered at that he should imbibe no favorable impressions concerning it. From such we might reasonably expect to hear the complaint, that botany has furnished none of the useful and astonishing results of chemistry; that it gives rise to none of those grand and over-



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powering conceptions, which the study of astronomy crowds upon the mind; that we find in it little of the strong dramatic interest, so powerfully awakened by the changing scenes of creation and destruction which geology displays. In short, however well calculated its study may be considered to arrest the attention and induce good habits of observation in the young, or to afford those of riper age a pleasing relaxation from other pursuits, it is too commonly regarded as destitute of those general views and profound discussions that require much thinking, or the exercise of a severe and precise logic. It may be said, and no doubt with justice, that such erroneous notions are the fault of those who entertain them, and that little knowledge of any subject can ever be expected, if a man can be turned from its pursuit at the first appearance of a technical word, or confine himself to the pages of a school-book. This may be true enough, but it is our business at present to show the cause of this prejudice, not its unreasonableness.

The books; that are put into the hands of beginners in this country, contain chiefly the merest elementary descriptions of the organs of plants, and perhaps a meagre account of their functions; being written by persons who are incapable, from their limited attainments, of conveying the slightest idea of the more elevated parts of the science. Books of a higher order, we know, have been occasionally published here; but without a single exception that we can think of at this moment, they have been the productions of authors who have not attained the highest rank in the science, nor been duly sensible of the advances made in it by others. While the works of Sir J. E. Smith have found editors and publishers with us, the masterly writings of Decandolle and Brown have been suffered to remain under the veil of a foreign or dead tongue, unheard of by the great mass of botanical students. Had half the efforts been made to present the science in a light at all worthy of its real merits, that have been used in teaching words, or disseminating loose and superficial views, its pretensions to a high character would long since have been seen and acknowledged. We should not now be obliged to say, at the risk of being suspected of exaggeration, that no science is more distinguished than botany for the enlargement and permanence of its general views, for the strictness and accuracy of its reasonings, for the sure and cautious deductions on which its great principles are established,

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for the demonstrations of the harmony and contrivance with which the organic world is ordered, and especially for a spirit of patient and profound philosophy, which alone can confer upon a science real dignity and value. To obtain a rank among the most distinguished botanists of the present day, demands not only long and laborious investigation, but the exercise of talents that belong to the highest order of mind; for the relations to be discovered, and the principles to be deduced, must be the result of profound and untiring reflection. The laws whereby the vegetable economy is regulated, those which govern the affinities and differences of its various members, their distribution over the surface of the earth, and their connexion with the physical agents around them, are just beginning to be discerned, and their study will long present a field of inquiry, in which the most philosophical genius may find ample scope for the exercise of its powers. The whole end of botany is not accomplished, when we have accurately described the characters of plants by which they are distinguished from one another, and given them a name and a place in the great register of nature; for we are thereby furnished with no better knowledge of the *plants themselves*, than we could obtain of the propensities and mental faculties of a runaway, from the advertisement that describes his clothes and person. Neither does the branch of physiology which teaches us the functions and general economy of plants, furnish us with that particular knowledge of *the* plant that we wish, any more than the most intimate acquaintance with metaphysics or human anatomy would enable us to pronounce at sight upon the mental or physical habits of an individual man. The noblest end of botany, now, is to ascertain the points of resemblance and difference between plants, which associate them with and remove them from one another, to trace the progress of organization through all its gradations from its lowest to its highest forms, in short, to lay open the operation of all the causes which modify the conditions of their existence. This is that *philosophy of botany*, to the advancement of which the most eminent in its pursuit are directing their utmost efforts, and some more adequate notions of which are necessary to gain for it the general respect that it really deserves.

The great, the essential preliminary towards the attainment of this end,—if indeed it may not be more properly considered

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as comprising the end itself,—is to improve our classifications; for these involve so many considerations,—have reference to so many points in the history of the plant,—that when it is once fixed in the place to which it most naturally belongs, we are thus made acquainted with the most valuable knowledge concerning it, always excepting its practical uses, which are determined by experiment. Had this truth been generally recognised, and made the basis of improvement in botanical science, we should now be spared the regret that we experience, while looking back on its progress, to see how much labor and zeal have been expended on points of comparatively small or secondary importance, to the neglect of those that deserved the first and closest attention. We should not have to deplore that common misapprehension of the true nature and purposes of botanical classification, which has given rise to a fatal jealousy among men zealously devoted to the cultivation of the same pursuit, and lain like a blight on the growth of this beautiful science. While the number of described plants was small, and those but imperfectly known, the only motive that led to their systematic arrangement was the greater convenience it afforded of ascertaining their names, and, in the facilities which it supplied for this object, consisted the sole merit of the arrangement. The principle thus laid down, and which was well enough in the commencement of the science, continued, however, to maintain all its force long after the accumulated results of discovery demanded more ample and accurate information, more enlarged views, and a spirit of philosophizing that should concern itself with things rather than words. And what is stranger still, after this kind of classification had been carried to its highest possible degree of perfection, and every thing been accomplished by it that could have been anticipated, it was looked upon as rendering any other on different principles and for different purposes altogether unnecessary, and all that remained for botanists was to add to the existing heap of crude and barren materials. The object indeed was an important, an indispensable one, and the mind that best accomplished it was one of no ordinary capacity, but after all, it is only a means and not an end, for which it seems to have been generally mistaken.

It is to be understood, that the difficulty under which naturalists labored for a long time, and which operated as a serious check on the progress of science, was the want of a system, whereby

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the contributions to the common fund of information could be easily arranged and readily referred to by others. Without this their researches were almost vain, and their results unprofitable. The same necessity still continues. Fifty thousand species of plants have now been discovered, every one of which has been examined, its characters set down, its relations unfolded, and of many, the properties and uses have been ascertained. But how is this knowledge to be referred to? With one of this immense multitude in our hands for the first time, how are we to ascertain a single fact concerning it, without previously making ourselves acquainted with its *name*? What clue is to guide us through the vast labyrinth of genera and species, and bring us at last to the very plant in question? Some system of arrangement or classification, of course, is the only thing that will remove the difficulty, and those that have been constructed in direct reference to this point, viz. for ascertaining the *names* of plants, are called *artificial* or arbitrary methods, in contradistinction to the *natural* methods founded on the relations of plants, and indicated by nature itself. Each of these methods has distinct and peculiar purposes of its own, and when these are understood and clearly kept in view, there cannot be a question with those in the least qualified to judge, that both have a utility that is indispensable to the interests of the science. Simple and intelligible as this appears, yet an unaccountable delusion seems to have prevailed, that they are not merely different from, but opposed to each other; that their ends are the same, but attained by different routes; that their merits are conflicting, and are to be weighed in the same scales together. Opposition, jealousy, and party-spirit have thus been excited, where naturally no foundation for them ever existed in difference of opinion or interest.

Bearing in mind the fact above stated, that in the artificial method the object is merely to ascertain the names of plants, we, of course, should not expect to find them arranged according to their general affinities, for a single organ may be assumed, and the differences which it presents in different species be made the basis of the classification. Thus, if we class plants according to the form, absence, presence, or some other condition of the corolla, with Tournefort, or of the stamens, with Linnæus, we shall bring species together, agreeing in respect to these organs, while in every other particular, there

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may be the utmost possible difference between them. Plants, between which the most obvious family likeness exists, may be torn asunder, and placed in classes far remote from one another, the object being not to ascertain relations but names. Though any part or quality of the plant may be made the basis of this method, yet its design will be best fulfilled when this basis is something inherent in the plant, easy to be observed, found in the greatest number of plants, and presenting sufficient variation in different species to make it easily and clearly expressed. The artificial methods were exceedingly defective, and about as numerous as the botanists who used them, till Linnæus, after devoting all his energies to their improvement, finally succeeded in constructing one which superseded every other, and has maintained its superiority to the present day, unrivalled and undisputed. Considering the stamens as uniting the conditions just mentioned to the greatest extent, he fixed upon these organs as the ground of his classification, and certainly no man, starting from a single idea, was ever conducted to more brilliant and durable results. His first eleven classes were founded on the number of stamens; the two next, on their insertion; the two next, on their comparative length; the five next, on their union; the three next, on their separation from the pistils; and the last, on their absence or obscurity. The remarkable facility which this method afforded for ascertaining the names of plants, and its admirable flexibility under difficulties, were so strongly contrasted with the deficiency and awkwardness of all previous contrivances, that we cannot wonder at all at the universal acclamation that greeted its announcement, or the hearty tribute of homage and thanksgiving bestowed upon its author. And still we ought not to forget the numerous other circumstances, that contributed at the time to give popularity to the new system. Within a short period of its appearance, the rapid progress of discovery had made the defects of other systems more apparent and onerous than ever; the credit of discovering the functions of the stamens had just been given to its author; science was incalculably benefited by his introduction of specific names and characteristic phrases, and in his hands botanical nomenclature was endowed with a precision and force it had never before known. Add to this, that he had rendered important services to every other branch of natural history; the whole domain of nature had been subject to his researches, and he had

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every where left the impressions of his comprehensive mind. We mention this, not in disparagement of the sexual system, for we have no wish to detract in the slightest degree from its merits, but in order to account for the common disposition of its followers to give to it merits that it neither does nor can possess, and pertinaciously to claim for it an end never thought of by its author himself. It is not the first time that a man, who has done one thing well, has been supposed by his over-fond friends to have accomplished every thing.

In the natural method, plants are arranged according to their natural relations; those being associated together, which most nearly resemble one another in the whole of their structure and appearance. They are expected to agree not in one particular only, but in many; all minute and trivial characters are disregarded, while the prominent and striking features, being indicative of family resemblance, and connected with the general economy of the plant, are assumed as furnishing the only ground that should determine their relations. Every plant stands by the side of those it most resembles, and if our classes and orders are not defined by well-marked limits, but gradually blend together on their outskirts, it certainly is not our fault, for we do no more than preserve those family resemblances,—in fact, copy that arrangement of the vegetable tribes, which nature itself has made. So plain and numerous are the affinities that exist between certain plants, that little botanical tact is required to discern them; they are evident at sight to the least practised observer. Every body can see this strong family likeness between the different species of the Grasses, and of the Palms, for instance, and would expect to find them, in a natural classification, arranged by the side of one another. Let us not be misunderstood; nature has instituted neither classes, orders, nor genera. She has done nothing more than to throw together the various members of the vegetable kingdom, in groups of more or less distinctness and extent. It is our business to ascertain and define the particular conditions on which their affinities depend. They must necessarily be less obvious in some cases than in others, but are not on that account the less real and strong. Inasmuch as traits of consanguinity between different men may be discerned in their moral and intellectual resemblance, when their features and complexion would never betray the fact, so to discern the affinities of plants and animals, we must often go beneath the surface,

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and find, in more important parts of their structure, marks of relationship of the clearest and strongest kind.

This brief exposition of the objects of the artificial and natural methods of classification, will show well enough their several uses in the study of botany, and enable our readers to see that while both are indispensable, the latter cannot be neglected, without entirely overlooking the grandest views and deepest principles that the science contains. An exclusive attachment to the artificial method accustoms the mind to partial observation and superficial views; for as the attention is directed solely to the sexual organs, and that only for the purpose of finding the name of the plant, it is perfectly obvious, that much in its history must go unknown and unstudied. The very convenience and facility which it continually affords, incline the mind more and more to look at vegetables in a single point of view, and finally to regard this single object of finding their names, as constituting the whole science of botany. Incorrect notions relative to the nature of organs, and the force of characters, are insensibly imbibed; and while exaggerated estimates are made of the importance of some of these, most unphilosophical notions are entertained of the insignificance of others. In the natural method, on the contrary, not one, but all the organs pass under review, and are submitted to close examination, before the plant can be traced to its place in the general arrangement, so that the process of finding its name acquaints one with the most valuable points in its whole history. Instead of referring directly to the specific description, after a hasty glance at the stamens and pistils, the calyx, corolla, seed-vessel, seed, and general aspect are also considered; and thereby the student becomes better acquainted not only with the plant, but with a variety of properties which it possesses in common with a great many others. The study of affinities, when applied to particular species, necessarily throws light on other species; a knowledge of one constantly illustrating and increasing that of others. On the score of convenience, too, the artificial has but little advantage over the natural method, to one who is already acquainted with a considerable number of plants. In most cases he would hardly trouble himself to count the exact number of stamens, in order to ascertain its name, for the first glance would show him its affinities with others that he has previously examined, and consequently lead

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him, at once, to its place in the natural system. Thus the relations that the plant possesses with other plants, and which form the most valuable part of its history, are already manifest before he has found its name; while he who neglects the study of the natural system is unable to advance a single step in the knowledge of the plant, till he is master of this fact. The decided and emphatic testimony in its favor of Linnæus himself, is a striking proof of the comprehensiveness and impartiality of his views, and is singularly contrasted with the misplaced jealousy of some of his disciples. He declares, 'that the natural method is the first and last object of botany;' 'that its fragments even should be diligently studied;' 'that none but poor botanists think it of little value;' 'that it is the highest aim of his own labors and of those of every accomplished naturalist;' 'that he had made some discoveries, and that the man who would remove his few remaining doubts, should be his *Magnus Apollo.*'

Many attempts have been made to arrange the vegetable kingdom according to a natural system of classification; but Jussieu was the first to develope its true principles and construct its foundations and frame-work, to be enlarged and completed by the labors and superior knowledge of succeeding botanists. Considering the immense researches that were required to bring the undertaking to any thing like a finished condition, and the disadvantages which naturalists of those days labored under, we have more reason to be surprised at its excellence than its imperfections, and feel constrained to look on it as one of the noblest monuments ever erected by human industry and genius in the great temple of nature. Many and important as are the changes it has suffered since its commencement, the impress of its original author is visible at every step, and time has not withered a single laurel that has been placed upon his brows. The fundamental principle of his system is, that all the organs and likewise all the points of view under which they may be considered, have not an equal degree of importance or permanence; that some control the others and necessarily determine their relations. It is this principle of the subordination of characters, first distinctly set forth by Jussieu, and now applied in the classification of every department of natural history, which drew from Cuvier the splendid and merited eulogium, 'that in the sciences of observation it created an epoch as important as the chemistry of Lavoisier in the



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sciences of experiment.' To the development of this great idea, the labors of botanists have been principally directed in their endeavors to bring the natural method to the highest possible degree of perfection, and though genius and devotion have been brought to the work in no stinted measure, yet to Decandolle we believe is assigned the palm of undisputed preëminence. His *Théorie Élémentaire de la Botanique*, which contains a masterly exposition of the principles of natural classification, is the noblest contribution ever made to the Philosophy of Botany, and justly entitles its author to a place among the Newtons and Galileos of science. It is the production of a mind, that could dwell with minuteness on the smallest details without narrowing its range, and raise itself to the contemplation of the newest and boldest truths, without risk of yielding to the allurements of baseless hypothesis. If we are sometimes startled at the wonderful boldness and originality of his views, we are no less surprised, as we follow him in his course, to behold the caution and security with which every step to their attainment is effected, and are obliged to acknowledge in his reasonings the power of that logic of facts, in which no flaw nor sophistry can be detected. Ever treading on the utmost verge of truth, he never oversteps its confines to lose himself in the bewildering regions of theoretical speculation. His reasonings, though eminently acute and profound, are characterized by a remarkable simplicity, and presenting a noble specimen of philosophical induction, they proclaim their author a worthy disciple of the school of Bacon. Few are the naturalists, of whatever age or experience, to whom the pages of this work will not furnish through life, inexhaustible materials for study and reflection. As it is little known, however, in this country, and as little studied, we suspect, in England, we have thought we might do an acceptable service to such of our readers as are interested in Natural History, by presenting them not exactly an abridgment of its contents, but an analysis of its general principles.

The theory of natural classification consists essentially of three parts; which treat respectively of the comparative importance of the organs of plants, of the circumstances that may deceive the observer as to their true nature, and of the importance of each point of view under which an organ may be considered.

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I. *Comparison of organs.* In order to ascertain the relative importance of the organs, it is necessary to compare them in reference to their functions. We say, for instance, that the brain holds a higher rank than the nerves, and the heart than the veins, but this does not decide the relative rank of the brain and heart. Or, to adduce an illustration of a different kind, a general is higher than a captain, and a governor of a province than the mayor of a town, but the arbitrary laws of etiquette alone decide, whether the general or governor be entitled to precedence. The first general principle in the classification of organized beings is, that the importance of each organ can be calculated only when compared with those organs, which relate to the same class of functions. In the vegetable organization there are two classes of functions, one destined to the preservation of the individual, the other to that of the species. These, no doubt, are of equal importance, and always possess corresponding degrees of perfection. Hence, we deduce another general principle of classification, viz. that systems, established upon either of these two grand classes of functions, would be equally natural, provided they were constructed with the same care. The preference, indeed, has been usually given to the reproductive organs, because differences in the vegetable organ za-tion are more perceptible in them than in the nutritive organs, and more especially too, because the latter have been comparatively but little studied. Were they both equally well understood, without doubt a system founded on one, would be identical with one established on the other; for every thing leads us to believe, that any complication, or other modification in one class of functions, is attended by a similar one in the other. Cesalpinus had established certain classes upon the structure of the embryo alone, many centuries before Desfontaines was conducted to the same result by making use of the nutritive organs. Hence also we make the division of plants into Monocotyledons and Dicotyledons with so much the more confidence, because we are equally led to it, whether we assume as the basis of our reasonings, the reproductive or nutritive organs. In order to estimate the importance of each organ in a given function, we must ascertain what is essential to its performance, when reduced to its simplest conditions. Thus, the essential part of reproduction is fecundation, and the fecundating organs are con-

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sequently of higher importance than all their envelopes. At first, the sexual organs are equally indispensable, but the duty of the male parts is of short continuance, and they, together with a portion of the female parts, are destroyed after fecundation. But as the female organ, beside this short-lived part, includes another for which all the rest are constructed, its importance is obviously greater than that of the male. Again: in the part of the female organ that remains, the integuments or fruit may be separated from the seed, and exist but for it. The seed has thus a higher value than its envelopes; and continuing the same reasoning, we at last find the embryo performing the most important part in the whole function of reproduction. If, now, our conclusions be just, the organs may be arranged, in regard to their relative importance, in the following order. 1. The embryo, the great end of all the rest. 2. The sexual organs, which are only the means. 3. The envelopes of the embryo, viz. the integuments of the seed and the pericarp. 4. The envelopes of the sexual organs, viz. the corolla, calyx and involucre. 5. The nectaries and other accessory organs.

Another means of judging of the relative importance of organs, is by the degree of constancy with which they appear in the vegetable organization. Some, we know, are frequently absent, some, not so often, while others are almost always present. Hence we infer, that the stamens and pistils have a higher rank than the calyx and corolla, and these latter than the nectaries; the filaments of the stamen and pistil are thus shown to be of less consequence, than the anthers and stigmas.

A third means of judging is, to observe to what point a given organ is more or less intimately connected with the structure of certain groups, already acknowledged by naturalists. Thus, we conclude that stipules are more important than spines, because a great number of families either have or have not stipules, while there are many in which we find indifferently species with or without spines.

II. *The circumstances that may deceive the observer as to the true nature of the organs.* Before we can decide any question as to the relative importance of the organs, we need some means of distinguishing the organs themselves, and recognising their true nature, under all the modifications they are liable to experience. Looking at a single organ abstracted from the general structure, we can judge of its nature solely by its use,

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whatever may be its position, form, or mode of action; thus, the organ of vision is called the eye, and the part that bears the flower is called the peduncle. But when we examine beings as a whole, and judge of the nature of the organs in reference to the symmetrical plan on which they are constructed, this method will lead us into grievous errors. The tail of the kangaroo serves the animal as a leg, yet nobody denies that it is still a tail; the nose of the elephant, prolonged to a great length, performs the office of a true hand; and the teeth implanted in the incisive bone, serve a purpose entirely foreign to mastication, yet none pretend to dispute the anatomical analogy of these organs with the nose and teeth of other mammifers. So too, we see the leaves of plants sometimes prolonged and changed into tendrils for the purpose of supporting the stem, though their primitive function is to elaborate the nutritious juices. The stipules, the peduncles, and even the lobes of the corolla may be converted to the same use, and every body is familiar with the leafy appearance and structure of the branches of the Indian Fig, or Prickly Pear, (*Cactus Opuntia*). From these examples and a host more that we might mention, we deduce the general conclusion, that it frequently happens, in consequence of a given system of structure, that a certain function, not being sufficiently performed by the organ ordinarily allotted to it, is discharged wholly or in part by another. It is this system of organization, this symmetry of the organs as compared with one another, of which a knowledge is essentially necessary to a perception of the general harmony and natural classification of beings. This symmetry of parts, which should be a prominent object of the naturalist's studies, is, in one word, the result of their relative disposition; and therefore, whenever this disposition is the same, no matter how various may be the form of particular organs in other respects, the subjects present a kind of general resemblance, that strikes the least practised eye.

Among the causes of error that are liable to mislead us in ascertaining the true nature of the organs, the principal is *abortion*, more or less complete, which alters their symmetry. Every body knows, that sometimes certain parts of organized beings do not receive that increase and development for which they were evidently destined, owing either to the compression of a foreign body, or a loss of part of their nourishment. This

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effect may be produced by internal causes, such as *caries*, for instance, as well as external; but among those which prevent certain organs from receiving their full increase, it is possible that some may be the necessary consequences of the growth of another part, and will, of course, constantly occur in a given system of organization. We may, therefore, admit in theory the constant and predisposed abortion of certain organs, either wholly or in part. This is a startling doctrine to those yet uninitiated into a knowledge of the more hidden laws of organization, but is, nevertheless, as easy of proof as an abundance of the clearest facts can make it. Whoever will take the trouble to cut across the ovary of a horse-chestnut flower, soon after the petals have fallen, will find three cells and two seeds in each cell; but let him look a few weeks afterwards, when the fruit has attained its perfect growth, and three seeds or nuts are the most that can ever be found,—sometimes but one. But to remove all doubt as to the fact and nature of this phenomenon, we have only to cut open an ovary every day after the period of flowering, to see some of the seeds gradually increasing, while the others are observed to remain stationary, and finally to be completely choked by the development of the first. Now, when we bear in mind that this phenomenon is constant and takes place in trees perfectly sound, are we not forced to believe, that it is owing to some circumstance in the very system of the organization of this tree? In the oak, too, we have another familiar instance of a three-celled and six-seeded ovary finally resulting in one perfect seed only. The disappearance of the sexual organs is a very common occurrence, of which an example may be witnessed in the marginal florets of the snow-ball genus, and many other plants whose flowers grow together in large masses. The question then recurs, how shall we recognise the general symmetry of plants, amid the confusion produced by these partial abortions? Some light may be obtained on this point from observing appearances denominated *monstrous*,—an epithet commonly given to all such as differ from the habitual state of the organs, though many of them are returns of nature to the symmetrical order. Thus, to recur to an example already cited, if, by some accidental cause, the six little seeds of the horse-chestnut or oak should obtain their full growth, and present us with a fruit of six nuts or acorns, we should call it monstrous, while, in truth, it is the single-seeded fruit

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that is the real monster. The Antirrhinum or Toad-flax has a personate corolla, the lower segment of which sends out a long spur, with four stamens of unequal length, and the rudiment of a fifth. In a variety of this plant called Peloria, the flower is perfectly regular, having an equal five-lobed corolla sending out five equidistant spurs, in which are five equal stamens. Here is a most singular case of a return of nature to her favorite symmetry, and no doubt can be left as to which is the real monster. The rare example of certain compound flowers, where we see the egret become leafy and assume the appearance of a true calyx, is a strong proof of the egret's being, in fact, an abortive calyx. It is well known also, that trees which have spinous branches in a dry soil, cease to have them in a fertile one,—a sufficient proof that spines are abortive branches.

Another guide, less sure perhaps, but adapted to more general use, is analogy or induction. It is found solely in a knowledge of the respective positions of organs. In an Albuca, for instance, we find the entire structure of a liliaceous plant, excepting that it has only three stamens bearing anthers, while between them we observe three filaments placed precisely where stamens would be, and very similar to the existing stamens. Hence, we conclude that these filaments are abortive stamens. In the Ice-plant (Mesembryanthemum,) we find a great number of filaments disposed in several ranks, but all adhering by their bases, and attached to the same point of the calyx, the interior bearing fertile anthers, the middle having the anthers wholly or in part abortive, and the exterior being true petals. We conclude then, that in this genus, the petals are naturally abortive stamens, and from a crowd of similar facts we are led by a very powerful analogy to the belief, that the petals of all plants, as a general theorem, are only filaments of stamens, whose development is in the relation of cause or effect to the abortion of the anther. When too we see the calyx of a Valerian or Scabious evidently assuming the form of an egret or pappus, we are induced by analogy to extend this result to the compound flowers, and conclude that *their* pappus is only an abortive calyx. Finally, by analogy alone, we judge in a host of cases of the natural number of the parts of flowers and fruits, and are led to look carefully for those whose abortion we suspect. It is the successful use of this principle which, more than any thing else, facilitates the

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study of nature, while the number of its objects are daily increased by discoveries, and constitute in fact, the true genius for Natural History.

The proximate cause of abortion is principally defect or excess of nourishment, and it may be well to consider a little farther the operation of these causes; and first, the effect of abortion by defect on the organ itself. When partial, it gives rise to inequalities between organs naturally similar, and this is the principal if not the only cause of the irregularities presented in the structure of vegetables. Every thing which has any bearing on this subject, goes to establish the conclusion, that all organized beings are regular in their intimate nature, and that abortions, variously combined, produce all the irregularities that arrest our observation. In this point of view, the slightest inequalities between organs of the same name in a plant, are important, because they tell us in language plainer than words, that we may find analogous plants where this inequality is still greater, and others where these organs, thus subject to partial abortion, have entirely disappeared. It may be received as a general principle, that wherever, in any given system of organization, there is inequality between organs of the same name, this inequality may attain its maximum, viz. the annihilation of the smallest part. When the abortion of an organ has proceeded so far as to prevent it from discharging its functions, it may be enabled, by this very circumstance, to fulfil some other functions. The abortion of the extremity of the leaf in vetches renders this part capable of performing the functions of a tendril, and abortion of the flowers of the Vine turns the peduncle to a similar use. In the same way, branches are changed into spines, and serve as defences to the plant, and the calyx of compound flowers into a pappus, which is useful, not more to the protection of the sexual organs, than the dispersion of the seed. It may happen, however, that an abortive organ, having lost the power of performing its proper function, never becomes adapted to any other, and remains without any manner of utility in the plant. In a multitude of vegetables, we find abortive stamens and pistils reduced to simple filaments or stumps, and evidently useless. Petals are sometimes found so small that they can hardly be discovered, and cannot protect the sexual organs. What purpose can those florets of certain compound flowers serve, which are invariably sterile? In the animal kingdom, the nipples of

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males, the rudiments of clavicles in the Cats, and of digits in the Ruminants, present us instances of a similar kind. These useless parts are the result of the primitive symmetry of the organization, and so far is their existence from being an argument against the general order of nature, that it furnishes one of the most striking demonstrations in its favor.

Finally, abortion may be so complete as to leave no trace whatever of the organ. Sometimes, it may be discovered, as in the seed of the oak, in the earliest periods of its existence, and observed to be gradually diminishing, while, in other cases, the organ is never found in any stage of growth. Here abortion is determined by causes so remote, that it is completed before it could be visible to us, although it may nevertheless have once existed. To illustrate this idea, let us suppose a branch of a palm, cut open from top to bottom, and our attention directed to the bunch or cluster in the centre of the section near the top, which is destined to expand the following year, then, a little lower down to the one that is to expand the second year, below that to one of the third year, and so on till we arrive at that which will expand seven years hence. Now, in certain palms, there is an entire abortion of some parts of the flower, and though this part may never be visible when the flower is developed, yet no one can deny that it may have existed in the bunch of the proximate year, or in one of the following, and that with the aid of proper instruments we might have discovered it. These abortions, like others, may be accidental or natural: when the former, we may observe the part unaffected by abortion in other individuals of the same species; when natural, predisposed as it were by the march of vegetation, we recognise the abortion only by the analogy of neighboring species. The effects of abortion on other organs will differ according to the degree to which it is carried. If it be considerable, or if the nourishment be thrown upon organs of a more variable nature, there results, not only a change of size, but of function. In double flowers, which present a remarkable example of this kind, the abortion of the anthers permits the filaments to be developed beyond measure, and become transformed into veritable petals. All that has been said of abortions by defect is equally true of abortions by excess, but in an inverse sense; and thus, while one necessarily produces the other, and both exist together, it is impossible in most cases to determine which is the cause, and which the effect. Resuming now the imme-



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diate consequences of this theory of abortion, we see in it, first, an explanation of a multitude of anomalies in the number of the parts of plants; secondly, of many, perhaps all, the inequalities of proportion in similar parts; thirdly, of the changes of form, and consequently of use, so frequent in organization, and incomprehensible without this theory.

The next source of error to be considered, is the *adhesion* or *engrafting* of organs. Every body knows that a bud or shoot, placed upon another tree under certain conditions, is united to it in such a manner as to form a part of it and grow as if it were on its own stem. Every body knows, too, that in forests we find trees of the same or analogous species, which having been accidentally approximated, are united together so as to form but one trunk, and many have observed that certain organs of plants, that have been brought near one another, are united in a most intimate manner; that two neighboring flowers may be so united as to form but one, having a double number of parts, and that two leaves may also adhere together, so as to form but one of a singular shape. So long as these adhesions take place rarely, they are considered, and justly too, as simple accidents, and no importance is attached to them in classification. But let us suppose that two ovaries, for instance, stand very close to each other from their origin, as in the case of the Pigeon-berry, (Mitchella Repens); it is clear, that by reason of this approximation, the opportunity of coalescing is so great, that union will always take place and we shall never see them separate. Now, this adhesion is nothing more than an *accident*, but it is one which is determined by causes belonging to organization, and as constant as the organ itself, insomuch that we have what may be called a constant accident, and though these terms seem contradictory, this kind of phenomenon is still very common in nature.

Not only may similar organs be primarily disposed in such a manner as not to be able to grow without adhering together, but the same thing takes place in different organs; and it is remarkable, that while this phenomenon has been recognised under certain circumstances, it has, in analogous cases, been entirely overlooked or denied. Any organ, a calyx or corolla, for instance, may be described in two ways; either analytically, by considering it as an unique whole divided into parts more or less distinct, or synthetically, as an aggregate of parts essentially distinct, but more or less approx-

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imated or united. In the first method, we are bound to render an explanation of the causes and laws of the separation of the parts; in the second, to give a similar explanation as to their approximation or union. Both methods involve some hypothetical considerations, and yet, we must follow one or the other. If we are describing a Hollyhock, we must either regard the corolla as an unique whole, divided into several portions called petals, or the petals as distinct organs, which by their union form the corolla. Each of these modes of reasoning may possibly have some good foundation, but certainly it cannot be right to adopt one in the case of the Hollyhock, and the other, when treating of a different flower. We must be consistent, and a method being once admitted, it must be adhered to in all analogous cases. The phenomena of crystallization, to borrow an illustration from a neighboring science, were explained by Rome de l'Isle, by considering crystals as integral bodies, which, in consequence of different truncations, assume all the secondary forms. The Abbé Hauy, on the contrary, explained the same facts, by supposing primitive molecules, which, aggregating after particular laws, determine all the secondary forms. Either theory may be adopted, though the former is now abandoned; but what would be thought of a mineralogist, who should describe one crystal after Rome de l'Isle's method, and another, after Hauy's? And yet, such is the state of botany, that this is constantly done in regard to that science. It becomes, therefore, a matter of serious inquiry, which of these two methods best expresses the whole of the facts, and whether there be cases where they may be blended together. When we speak of the perfoliated leaves of the Honeysuckle, the idea meant to be conveyed is, that an unique or orbicular leaf is traversed or enfiladed by the stem that bears it, yet no one at the present day hesitates to consider this pretended perfoliated leaf as composed of two opposite leaves united at their base. In precisely similar cases we use the term *connate* leaves, which expresses nearly enough the idea of union; we follow all its degrees from the slightest to the most intimate kind, and when we perceive an interval towards the point of junction, we still consider it as two leaves imperfectly united, not as an unique leaf deeply gashed. The reason is, that at the base of the plant the two opposite leaves are separate and distinct, and that as we approach the summit, they tend more and more to be united; that we find

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each half of the perfoliate leaf unique in appearance, and possessing all the organization of one of the inferior leaves. Thus, though the phenomenon is constant, no one hesitates to consider it as a kind of accident, determined by the organization itself.

The law here recognised is applicable to every case of connate leaves, and we must admit the general conclusion, that as leaves may adhere together accidentally, there are cases in which this phenomenon occurs constantly, in consequence of their nature and position. All that has been said of leaves must be readily admitted of stipules, which resemble them so closely; so that when we see all the Leguminosae having a stipule on each side of the petiole, we may conceive that, if these two stipules should be so large as to touch on the side farthest from the petiole, they might be united, and consequently assume the appearance of an unique stipule opposite the leaf. The involucres, too, are subject to the same law of adhesion, as might readily be supposed from analogy, since these organs are now universally regarded as only assemblages of floral leaves. In the Umbelliferae, the involucre generally consists of a certain number of whorled and separate leaflets, but in some species of this order, there is found instead of this whorl, a leafy disk, presenting as many teeth and furrows, as there are leaflets in the neighboring species. We are therefore constrained to regard this disk as formed by the natural union, more or less complete, of many leaflets, and not as a single-leaved involucre. If then the leaves and involucres be so readily regarded as subject to this law of adhesion,—of the union of several distinct parts into one,—why should not the fact of its operation be admitted in regard to the calyx? This organ resembles the involucre in every respect; the anatomy of the sepals shows that they are entirely leafy organs; they are green and decompose carbonic acid like the leaves; they are almost always furnished with the same hairs, glands, and sacks as the true leaves, and finally, in a multitude of cases, accidental or habitual, we see them developed into true leaves. If then the calyx is of a leafy nature and so very analogous to the involucre, why describe it on a diametrically opposite plan? Why consider it as a unique organ, more or less divided, instead of saying, as in the preceding cases, that it is formed of pieces more or less united together? Besides, the latter method involves no more hypothe-

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sis than the former; since, in a very considerable number of plants, the sepals are completely distinct from one another, and even attached separately to the peduncles. It is best supported too by their anatomy, for all the nerves of the calyx are directed from the base to the summit, as in leaves, though constantly described as if they proceeded from the summit to the base, and since all modern botanists admit the union of the calyx to the ovary, it would be strangely inconsistent to imagine, that the sepals could not be united as easily to one another as to a foreign organ. Instead of saying of a calyx, that it is deeply cleft, the most proper language obviously is, that the sepals are united only at the base; instead of describing it as lobed and toothed, the sepals should be considered as united half or more of their length; instead of distinguishing calices into polysepalous and monosepalous, we are bound to use the distinctions of polysepalous, or free sepals, and gamasepalous, or sepals more or less united, and reserve the term monosepalous for the rare cases, where there really exists but one lateral sepal.

The same reasoning, the same analogies are applicable with perhaps still greater force, to the operation of the same law upon the corolla. This is not an unique whole, more or less divided, any more than the calyx, but an assemblage or whorl of petals, sometimes perfectly free and sometimes more or less united. In many cases this union is in a manner manifest to the eye, while in others, it is indicated by the disposition of the vessels; where it is not thus visible, and the tubes are continuous, it may be conjectured by analogy, and by the insensible gradations to be observed between corollas with petals entirely free, and those with petals united. The corolla of the clover is formed of but one piece, instead of four separate and distinct petals, as in all the rest of the Leguminosae; yet who, on that account, would deny its analogy to that order, and that it differs only in the natural adhesion of its petals? Adopting the ordinary way of distinguishing corollas into monopetalous and polypetalous, we must suppose an organization entirely different, for what analogy is there between a flat petal associated with several others in a whorl, each attached to a single point, and a circular tubular petal, with many points of attachment and a sinuated margin? Such a fact can be considered as hardly possible, when we recollect how many families there are, in which we see plants with monopetalous

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and polypetalous corollas, indiscriminately mingled together. And what are we to make of those corollas, whose pieces, as in the vine, are separate at their base, but united at the summit? This reasoning becomes still more striking, when we consider the light in which stamens have been viewed. These parts possess an extraordinary analogy to petals; their point of attachment is constantly the same; their number and position are generally symmetrical; the anatomy and physiology of the filament of the stamen is perfectly similar to that of the claws of the petals, and in some flowers, they pass into each other by such insensible gradations, that it is impossible to say where one begins and the other ends. This being the case, we ought certainly to expect that the same mode of reasoning in regard to the adhesion of one should be equally applicable to that of the other. Now, however much the stamens may be united together, they never are considered in the light of an unique organ, divided more or less deeply into several parts, but always as separate and distinct organs, united according to the law of adhesion. But is this union of the filaments any more apparent than that of the petals? Are not the two phenomena equally constant in the same species? Are any more evident traces of it left in one than in the other? These two organs are of the same nature, and we must either consider the whorl of stamens as an unique whole, deeply cleft, or the whorl of petals as formed of many pieces more or less united. What would be thought of a zoölogist, who should describe the feet of the web-footed birds as orbicular disks, divided to a greater or less extent? All naturalists regard them as distinct digits, united by a membrane, and this manner of considering organs as compound bodies, is the only one that represents the natural state of things,—the only one that admits of clear expressions and exact comparisons.

The truth of this theory becomes still more manifest, when we attend to the manner in which petals adhere at their base. In a polypetalous flower we see that generally each petal is fixed at its base by a fibre which carries its nourishment, and that if its base be very large, the rest adheres only by cellular tissue. Every family has thus a certain disposition in the vessels of the petals, and it is always the same, whether they be united or not. This analogy is equally striking, when considered in another point of view. Petals are composed generally of a claw and limb, as stamens are of filament and anther, and

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adhesion ordinarily takes place by beginning at the base and finishing at the upper part, so that most petals, when they unite, adhere by their claws while the limb is free. In the same manner, most adhering stamens have the filaments joined and the anthers distinct.

We come now to the pistil, or what, in this relation, is the same thing, the fruit. In the Ranunculaceae, we generally find the fruit composed of a considerable number of partial carpels, united in some species only at their base, in others half their length, in others, nearly to their summit. Hence, no conclusion can be more natural than that ovaries, apparently unique but divided internally into many cells, are in reality formed by the constant and natural adhesion of many carpels. Sometimes the partitions between the cells are formed by the reëntering valves, the carpels being plainly united by their lateral faces,—a fact which beautifully illustrates this theory. We would say more on this point, but as it would be difficult to render our language intelligible to any but practical botanists, we are reluctantly obliged to dismiss thus briefly the most interesting among all the discussions on this subject.

If the above reasoning be correct, it appears that the adhesion of different organs takes place as a necessary consequence of primitive contiguity, constituting what is called *predisposed adhesion.* It is easily conceived that it may mislead us in regard to the number, position and nature of the organs, and that it constitutes a subject of considerable importance in classification. Every case of adhesion cannot be of equal consequence, and we are therefore led to adopt the following general rules for guiding our inquiries on this point. First, the adhesion of the different organs of fructification is so much the more important, as it takes place between parts in which this operation is most difficult. Secondly, the adhesion of these organs is so much the more important, as it is necessarily connected with the greatest changes in the general symmetry. Thus the union of the petals and stamens, of the filaments and styles, of the anthers and stigmas, of the ovary and calyx, in consequence of the great anatomical similarity of these parts, are phenomena of easy and frequent occurrence, and therefore of no great importance; while for the very opposite reason, the union of the corolla and calyx, of the stamens and calyx, of the corolla and ovary, must be regarded as instances of adhesion of the highest importance.

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We are not to suppose, however, that whenever two organs adhere together, they necessarily preserve all the parts of which they were originally composed. When two labiate flowers are united, we rarely find eight stamens, but seven, six or only five, and instead of ten lobes, their corolla may present indifferently all the numbers between five and ten. In fact, the union of two regular flowers is seldom recognisable except by an augmentation of the number of their parts, some of each being lost by abortion. This theoretical consideration may be applied, in many cases, for the purpose of recognising the affinities of certain plants. The Cruciferae, for example, have naturally four petals and six stamens, which inequality in the number of parts indicating a loss of the original symmetry of the flower, we wish to determine, whether they are related to plants whose number of stamens is double that of the petals, or to those where these numbers are equal. If to the former, we must suppose them in their primitive state to have had eight stamens, two of which have aborted; if to the latter, that each flower is originally composed of four petals and four stamens, but that they grow in threes, and that there is a union of the three flowers with an abortion of the lateral ones, excepting a single stamen in each. This latter hypothesis implies a more complicated operation than the former, but still appears to approach nearer the truth, for cases have been found where the flowers possessed four petals and four stamens, and where, in place of the two lateral stamens, there was on each side a flower with the same number of parts. We are still farther confirmed in the belief that this is the primitive state of the Cruciferae, because the position of the two lateral stamens is always below that of the others, because they are very constantly wanting in many species, and because the Hypecoum, the only genus with which the Cruciferae have any marked relation, has four stamens and four petals. This single case must suffice to show the practical application of the theory of abortion and adhesion, in unravelling the natural affinities of plants.

III. Having now exposed the principal difficulties in the way of recognising the symmetry of the organs, we shall show very briefly, in what this symmetry and the comparative value of its elements consist. The most important of these elements is the existence or absence of organs, and on this point, we must beware of some powerful causes of error. Two organs

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really existing may be so united and assume such an appearance, that the presence of one becomes problematical. Thus, the union of the calyx and corolla has given rise to the idea that one or the other of these organs is wanting in plants, where both really exist, and the union of the pericarp and spermoderm has sometimes induced the belief, that the seeds had no proper envelope, or that the pericarp was wanting. Certain organs may fail also, in consequence of abortion; and it is only by means of an acquaintance with the general symmetry of the plant, that we can distinguish between this phenomenon and that, where the organ is naturally wanting.

After the presence or absence of organs, the next most important element of their symmetry is their absolute and relative position, for here we expect the greatest and most permanent difference. The essential position of a particular organ must be determined in relation to that which serves as its real support, that is, from which it receives its origin and nourishment, and not organs foreign to its existence. This it is frequently very difficult to recognise, but their relative position, though less important, may be oftener and more surely employed. In all vascular vegetables, which comprise all with whose symmetry we are acquainted, we remark that their organs are placed relatively to one another in a general order. In the flower, the pistil occupies the centre, and the stamens, petals and sepals, composed of a certain number of parts, are disposed around the pistil according to different symmetries. They may be placed directly before or alternate with one another; they may correspond with the parts of the pericarp, or have no relation whatever with them. These different combinations possess considerable importance in classification, provided that we avoid the two sources of error already exposed, adhesion and abortion, which, by diminishing the number of the parts, conceal their true symmetry. Thus, it belongs to the symmetry of the Leguminosae to have the petals alternate with the sepals, but if the two inferior petals be united, or if one of the petals prove abortive, the number is reduced, and the symmetry is masked to the eyes of the superficial observer.

The absolute or relative number of organs is a character, whose importance has been very differently estimated, but which, like many others, varies under different circumstances. The absolute number of organs is liable to be modified by a variety of causes, such as abortion, adhesion, &c., but where



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all these sources of error are avoided, we cannot deny that this character is one of considerable importance, though subject to certain conditions. We may say, first, that the absolute number of organs in every plant is generally more fixed, and consequently so much the more important, the smaller that number is; secondly, that unity never exists naturally in any of the reproductive organs, except the pistil,—whenever they are found single it is the consequence of abortion or adhesion,—and in the conservative organs, unity of the leaves exists only in the Monocotyledons; thirdly, to ascertain the true absolute number of organs in a plant, it is necessary to go back, by means of the theory of abortion and adhesion, to the number that appears to be the primitive type of the class, or to one of its multiples. The numbers 4, 5, and their multiples seem to belong to the Dicotyledons, and 3, with its multiples, to the Monocotyledons, while 2 and its multiples are very permanent among the Acotyledons. Characters drawn from the relative number of organs, that is, from a comparison of the proportional number of the parts of the different systems of a compound organ, may be relied on with considerable confidence. Thus, the absolute number of stamens in the Epilobium is 8, the relative number twice that of the petals. Under this point of view, we are obliged to distinguish between *multiple*, *determinate*, and *indeterminate* relations. An instance of the first we have in the Epilobium, where the parts of the calyx are 4, corolla 4, stamens 8, and pistil 4; of the second in the Violet, where the parts of the flower are as 5 to 3 compared to those of the pistil; of the last, in the Magnolias, where the number is not fixed in the petals, stamens, or pistils. If now abortion take place in all the four systems of a flower at once, their relative numbers may remain the same, while their absolute number will be changed; but how are we to distinguish between these two kinds of numbers? If we consider that when a single system is altered, the flower becomes necessarily irregular, and that in all cases, where every system is affected at the same time, it remains regular, we arrive at a simple and exact theorem: viz.—In all regular flowers, the relative number of the parts of each system should be the first object of our research; in all irregular flowers, we begin by ascertaining the absolute number of each system, and thence deduce their relative

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numbers. When one or more parts of a system are so numerous as to present many ranks, the relations of number, though still existing, are difficult to be perceived, though by care and diligence we may sometimes find them. An oriental Poppy has been observed, which had 3 sepals, 6 petals, and 564 stamens, that is, 94 ranks of 6.

The next element of symmetry to be considered, is the absolute, relative and proportional size of the parts; and here we may compare together, in regard to size, two systems, or their parts. The proportional dimensions of the parts of a system are frequently a matter of great interest, for the whole study of irregular plants, and consequently, the whole art of referring them to the regular symmetries of which they form a part, rests upon the examination of the inequality of the parts of a system. The fundamental principle of this examination appears to be, that among vascular, and perhaps among all vegetables, the parts of the same system are naturally of equal size, and become otherwise only in consequence of phenomena, more or less intimately connected with the general structure of the plant. The causes of these phenomena we are not always able to specify, but the position of the flower on the stem undoubtedly determines a great many inequalities. When solitary, erect, and terminal, it is equally nourished, and will of course be regular, insomuch that it may be considered as an unexceptionable general law, that flowers thus situated are regular, even when they belong to a family ordinarily irregular. If other flowers spring up around it, forming a head, their equilibrium is disturbed; those in the middle, being equally pressed, will become abortive or change their form, though still continuing regular; the lateral ones, being unequally pressed by their neighbors, will have a tendency to increase on their external side, where the pressure is least. All families with a peculiarly irregular flower, are never observed to have the flowers terminal, always having them axillary, or disposed in a spike or cluster. Sometimes, in the Labiatæ, we find terminal flowers, but then they are always regular. An important result of these considerations is, that since the primitive symmetry of each system may be deranged by accidental causes, it becomes necessary, before we can establish a good classification, to trace back all irregular plants to their primitive and regular types, though these types may be rarely encountered, and sometimes

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are even ideal. Thus the Personatae are found to be only alterations from the type of Solaneae.

We have thus exposed very briefly the principles which determine the comparative importance of organs, and the method whereby we may graduate the degree of importance, presented by the different points of view, under which each organ may be studied. It is also requisite to show how these two modes of reasoning may be combined, or in other words, how we are to arrive at a proper appreciation of characters; for a character, in fact, is one manner of considering organs generally, applied to one in particular. As a general rule, the value of characters is in a ratio composed of the importance of the organ, and of the point of view under which we may consider it; so that characters, drawn from a particular organ, will have a value proportioned to that of the modification, and when drawn from the modification, it will be proportioned to the importance of the organs. Though the organs have different degrees of relative importance, yet the value of characters drawn from them will depend on the importance of the modification, for a very trivial one in a very important organ may furnish a character of less consequence, than a greater in a far less important organ. The results of the combination of these two elements will be equal or unequal. They will be equal, first, when the same modification is common to two organs of the same physiological rank; secondly, when two modifications of the same rank exist in one or two organs of the same rank; thirdly, when the importance of the organ is counterbalanced by that of the modification. Thus, if we compare the sensible qualities of the embryo, the highest of all the organs in the scale of importance, with the existence of the nectary; or in other words, if we compare the least important modification of the most important organ with the most important point of view under which the least important organ can be considered, we shall have two analogous results, as theory and observation both testify.

Here we must close our notice of the *Théorie Elémentaire.* Though many points have been left untouched, and though we are sensible that general principles must lose much of their force and clearness when presented without the proper illustrations and discussions, yet we trust that a worthier idea of philosophical botany has been conveyed, than is generally obtained

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from the common books on this science. The want of a work, in which the principles of the natural system should be made accessible to the English student, and which is capable of a practical application in the examination of plants, has long been painfully felt by those, whose attainments, though limited, are still sufficient to make them aware of the deficiencies of the Linnaean school, but who have no means of becoming acquainted with more enlarged and philosophical views. All our Floras and similar works, to which the botanical student is referred for the description of plants, are arranged according to the sexual method, and not a word perhaps meets his eye concerning their natural relations. In our schools and academies, the science, we believe, is taught in a similar spirit. The organs of fructification are pointed out in such a manner that they may be recognised under the most ordinary conditions, while the structure of the seed, and its changes during growth and germination, and especially the laws of the variation of the organs, are about as little regarded as if they never existed.

An attempt was made a few years since to supply the deficiency in question, by Sir James Edward Smith, in a work whose title we have quoted at the head of this article; but which does not, in our opinion, merit the reputation it has acquired in this country and abroad.

From this, we turn with satisfaction to the 'Introduction' of Professor Lindley, which, though it may not have accomplished quite all that we could have wished, will prove an invaluable work for the young student, for which he can never feel too thankful. A vast amount of information relative to the natural orders is here brought together from a multitude of sources, systematically arranged, and agreeably disposed. 'The plan adopted,' to use the author's own words, 'is this: To every collection of orders, whether called class, division, subdivision, tribe, section, or otherwise, such remarks upon the value of the characters assigned to it are prefixed, as the personal experience of the author, or that of others, shows them to deserve. To every order the Name is given which is most generally adopted, or which appears most unexceptionable, with its Synonymes, a citation of a few authorities connected with each, and their date: so that, from these quotations, the reader will learn at what period the order was first noticed, and also in what works he is to look

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for further information upon it. To this succeeds the Diagnosis, which comprehends the distinctive characters of the order, reduced to their briefest form, and its most remarkable features, without reference to exceptions. The latter are adverted to in what are called Anomalies. Then follow the Essential Characters; a brief description of the order, in all its most important particulars. This is succeeded by a paragraph styled Affinities, in which are discussed the relations which the order bears to others, and the most remarkable circumstances connected with its structure, in case it exhibits any particular instance of anomalous organization. Geography points out the distribution of the genera and species over the surface of the globe: and the head Properties comprehends all that is certainly known of the use of the species in medicine, the arts, domestic or rural economy, &c. A few genera are finally named, as Examples of each order.' We have no fault whatever to find with this *plan*, but it certainly appears to us, that the account of the Properties is disproportionately long; especially in a work like this, to most of the readers of which it must necessarily prove the least interesting portion of the work. Medical Botany is too important a branch of knowledge, to be treated of at great length in a work which has a far different design in view. We could have wished, that much of the room occupied by this head had been given to that of Affinities; for the valuable extracts from Decandolle, Brown, and some others, with which the latter is enriched, have made us regret that they were not even more numerous. The writings of botanists who have illustrated the affinities of plants are so scattered over periodical journals, transactions of societies, and other works, that they are almost inaccessible to the young student, particularly in this country, where these works are rarely seen.

The introduction, besides some remarks on the comparative merits of the different systems of classification, contains a short exposition of the organs of plants, as they are understood at the present day; but as this is insufficient for the proper understanding of the work, the American editor has very judiciously prefixed an excellent treatise published by Professor Lindley not long since, entitled, *An Outline of the First Principles of Botany*. It may be considered an epitome of vegetable organography, divested of all theoretical considerations,

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and expressing only such views as are well established by observation. In conclusion, we cordially thank Dr. Torrey for his agency in the re-publication of this work, for we trust it will give an impulse and direction to the study of botany which it has yet to receive on this side of the Atlantic.

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ART. III.—*Story's Constitutional Law.*

*Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States; with a Preliminary Review of the Constitutional History of the Colonies and States, before the Adoption of the Constitution.* By JOSEPH STORY, LL. D., Dane Professor of Law in Harvard University. In three volumes. 8vo. Boston. 1833.

IT would be impossible to write any thing which could properly be called a Review of this work, in much less compass than that of the work itself.—It is in fact a Review of the Constitution, preceded by a sketch of the Constitutional History of the States, before the Revolution. This introduction contains, in outline, the civil and political history of each of the American Colonies and Provinces, with indications of the peculiarities and varieties of their legislation. This is succeeded by the history of the Revolution, the formation, decline and fall of the Confederation, and the adoption, and general character of the Constitution. On this follows what properly forms the substantial portion of the work;—viz. a complete Commentary on the entire Constitution of the United States, in all its parts. It is obvious, that it embraces a vast number of separate topics; a great amount of historical facts; and a long succession of the most important discussions. The work, properly used, with a diligent and faithful resort to the authorities cited, amounts to a digested course of reading on constitutional law; and the student, well possessed of its contents, would need nothing farther in this great department, than that which the active and discriminating mind must elaborate itself, in order to make any study profitable.

It is a question that unavoidably presents itself, now we have the book, How we did without it?—It is evidently such

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a course on constitutional law, as is indispensable to the enlightened politician, to the accomplished lawyer, to the student of our history, and even the well informed American citizen. It would seem that no one, in either of these classes, could afford to be destitute of the information, or a stranger to the discussions, contained in this work; and yet how few of any profession possess the ability, the opportunity, and the materials for conducting their private studies to such a result, that they would find themselves the masters of the treasures contained in these volumes?—It would seem that the appearance, from time to time, of works like these is absolutely necessary, to enable the mass of men to keep along with the increasing demands of the professions. If the study of the professions were not occasionally facilitated by the preparation of a treatise like that of Blackstone, or the one before us, men would break down, under the rapidly accumulating mass of materials in all departments. It is not that the study of Blackstone can ever supersede the study of Coke; but it greatly facilitates it:—It furnishes general results, by a very compendious process, and leaves for maturer years and the urgency of specific occasions the laborious study of difficult points, in the sources. No man will be insensible to the importance of these treatises, who will consider how much form, and manner, and occasion have to do, in the imparting of knowledge. So inconsiderable a thing as the mere character, in which a book is written, is not indifferent. A person used to our common type is a little bewildered with black letter; and few individuals understand a thing in manuscript, as perfectly as in print. A child learns to speak a language correctly by the ear, long before it is capable of comprehending a rule of grammar. It is the province of a work like Mr. Justice Story's,—and by him most successfully administered,—to place the entire learning relative to the subject treated, in precisely that form which makes it most intelligible and most attractive to the student; giving him not all that the books contain, but all that the magnetism of a good mind takes up from them, as possessing the quality in request.

Such books are written from time to time; and they must be. For although when successfully executed they attain a permanent reputation and possess a permanent value, and consequently form a part of the standard literature of a profession, yet, after

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a time, society assumes phases so new;—and questions so unforeseen arise;—and affairs pass through revolutions so complete, although peaceful and silent;—that new elementary treatises become necessary. Constitutional law affords curious illustrations of these circumstances. It is true, there is a somewhat alarming tendency in this country, to resist the settlement of constitutional questions; to embalm doubts in everlasting preservation; to sacrifice history, practice, authority, and acquiescence, to the contested letter of the text; yet still reason and common sense will in some things have their way; and doubts and controversies will sometimes disappear with the occasions that produced them. A comparison of the Federalist with the work before us, in respect to the selection of the topics of greatest interest, will illustrate our meaning. The want of a bill of rights was one of the great objections to the Federal Constitution; and the provision, giving to Congress the powers of altering by law the regulations of the States as to the time, place, and manner of holding elections for members of Congress, '*with the exception of the places of choosing senators*,' was by no means one of the least anxiously debated clauses in that instrument. In framing the Constitution, this clause was found absolutely necessary to quiet the apprehensions of those, who feared that *places* would be appointed, by the General Government, for the choice of senators, where the electing body or bodies could not easily convene; and Mr. Nicholas tells us, in the debates of the Virginia Convention,* that the objection to the Constitution, growing out of this clause, had been echoed from one end of the country to the other. We doubt if a controversy could now be got up relative to either of these matters;—not even in Virginia, where there is such an unsated appetite for the metaphysics of the Constitution. On the other hand, the great questions which agitate the politics of the country at the present day, are scarcely glanced at in the contemporary discussions of the Constitution.

Its peculiar seasonableness at the present time gives Mr. Justice Story's work a value, which no work could have possessed under different circumstances. Constitutional law, in our day, instead of being the calm occupation of the schools, or the curious pursuit of the professional student, has become,

* 2 Elliott's Debates, p. 38.



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—as it were,—an element of real life. The Constitution has been obliged to leave its temple, and come down into the forum, and traverse the streets. Instead of the mystery of unseen powers, with which, in more auspicious times, the fundamental law of prosperous countries usually executes itself;—its functions have been fiercely questioned, and its strength put to the utmost strain. It is visionary, at periods of excitement like those we have witnessed, to expect to convince your opponent, in the argument of the specific point at issue. Temper is up, and men hate each other for their logic. But even in times like these,—in any times,—it is not easy to resist the effect of a scientific and systematic exposition of an entire frame-work of government, developing the harmony of all its provisions, and unfolding the purport of the letter through the unity and connexion of the spirit.

We should be glad, if we dared promise ourselves, that this work will produce all the effect which it ought, in satisfying the public mind on questions of Constitutional Law, and putting an end to the controversies, which agitate the country. We trust, indeed, that it will have a great and salutary influence, especially on the minds of that most important portion of the population,—we mean the young men,—whose minds are not yet poisoned by party. But it seems to be the unavoidable effect of a written constitutional instrument, to promote controversy. The text of the Constitution, like the text of Scripture, furnishes topics of disputation more abundant and curious, than those which arise on matters not reducible or not reduced to writing. It is partly to be ascribed to this, that questions of Constitutional Law are so much less frequent in England than in America.

What will be the ultimate operation of *written* constitutions (purely as such), is a matter of high interest, not yet sufficiently decided by experience. In the lapse of time, changes in the fundamental law of all countries have been found necessary. Many such changes have been brought about by violent means, as the result of great revolutions. Others, not less important, have quietly and unconsciously grown up in the way of legislation. It may be doubted whether written constitutions are friendly to changes of this character. Such constitutions must, of course, contain provisions for their own amendment; but it seems essential to the plan of a written constitution, that an

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amendment to it should not be made by a simple act of legislation. Every one knows the difficulty thrown in the way of all important amendments of the Constitution of the United States, by the complicated process required for that purpose. May it not happen that changes, required in the lapse of time, to suit the altered state of things, will be injuriously embarrassed or fatally obstructed by the process required to effect them? A great many plausible arguments could be adduced to show, that the equality of representation of great states and small in the Senate of the United States, is an anomaly in a popular government. Perhaps the strongest argument in favor of it is, that it was matter of compact at the outset; and that it will be a fatal error, to set the example of violating the original pledges of that compact. This argument, however, will daily grow weaker. It is a question in casuistry how long one generation can bind another. We remember to have heard the opinion expressed, eight years ago, by a very eminent disciple in the school of Nullification, that the People would not much longer allow Delaware and Rhode Island to have as much senatorial power, as New York and Pennsylvania. We think they will bear it a good deal longer. But the Constitution has provided that this article shall never be touched in the way of amendment, without the consent of the State which it might be proposed to deprive of its equal representation in the Senate; and what will be the practical efficacy of such a provision, is a question which we hope never to see put to the test.

The first portion of these Commentaries relates to the history of the Colonies and States, before the Constitution. The plan of the work required that this general survey should be brief and comprehensive. It presents the principal facts relative to each of the Colonies, in a series of chapters severally devoted to them. One of the most curious points in the history of this period, is the Confederation of the United New England Colonies. Judge Story has narrated its history* succinctly, but sufficiently at length, for its place in the Commentaries. We are inclined to think, that both as an historical document, and as an early effort toward the accomplishment of the destiny of the American States,—a Federal Union,—it deserves an elaborate and critical consideration. The incon-

* Vol. I. p. 90.

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venient form and dress, in which the records of the commissioners appear in Hazard's collection,—a book itself not very frequently to be met with,—repel the general reader. We beg leave to recommend to the Committee of Publications of the Historical Society, the subject of a new edition of this valuable document, in a modernized orthography, with a convenient division into chapters, an historical introduction, illustrative notes, and an index. We cannot but admire one indication of true republicanism in the mode, in which the articles of confederation were adopted by Plymouth Colony; not by the act of the colonial government alone, as appears to have been the case in Massachusetts, New Haven and Connecticut, but by the assent of the people *in the several townships.** The formation of this Union was delayed nearly ten years, after the time when it was first proposed, by the demand of a duty to be paid for the support of a fort at the mouth of the Connecticut.†

Mr. Justice Story justly remarks, in the general review of the history of the Colonies, which closes the first book, that the several efforts to establish a confederation, although unsuccessful, 'prepared the minds of the colonists for the gradual reconciliation of their local interests, and for the gradual development of the principles upon which a Union ought to rest.' The study of the history of the United Colonies of New England, imperfectly as it is preserved, affords no little instruction on this head; and as we know it was referred to by the framers of the Constitution, it is entitled to be regarded as authority, in the illustration of what may properly be called *union principles.* Thus the difficulty about the fort at the mouth of the river, which delayed the formation of the confederacy ten years, and formed, while it lasted, a most unpleasant subject of controversy, points directly to the expediency and policy of that portion of the Constitution, which provides that no 'vessels bound to or from one State shall he obliged to enter, clear, *or pay duties* in another.' In like manner, the positive acts of jurisdiction exercised by the commissioners, throw light on the essential objects and character of such a confederacy. The relations of the Colonies with the foreigners,—the French and Indians,—were a prominent subject of the care of the com-

* Hazard, II. p. 7. † Id. p. 87.

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missioners. They declared war, and negotiated peace, both with the Indians and the French. Conventions with both are found in the records. They took measures for the promotion of learning, by encouraging contributions to the college of Cambridge, on the modest suggestion of President Dunster, that it would be expedient to invite each head of a family to pay one peck of corn, or its equivalent, annually for that object. With a view to the preservation of the neutrality of the Colonies, in their relation with the Dutch, French, Swedes, and others, on the American continent, it was on the 5th September 1644, at a meeting at Hartford, 'ordered, that no jurisdiction, within this Confederation, shall permit any voluntaries to go forth in a warlike way against any people whatsoever, without order and direction of the commissioners of the several jurisdictions.' Substantially the same provision was made, for the credit to be given in one of the United Colonies to the judicial proceedings of another, as is made in the Federal Constitution for the like object.* Internal improvement was pointed out by the early instinct of necessity, as a great natural object to a confederation of States. We read under the same date, in 1644, 'Whereas a petition was delivered to the commissioners, desiring the mending of some places in the way from the Bay to Connecticut, it was agreed that it be left to Mr. Hopkins, President, to take care for providing some man or men to find and lay out the best way to the Bay, and the charge to be borne by the whole.' These instances will show the interesting analogy, which may be traced between this primitive plan of confederation, and the great constitutional compact of the present day. It labored under the incurable defect of the Confederation of the Revolution. It was not a government. It assumed great and beneficial powers, but it had no officers of its own to execute them. A question early arose on this point. Massachusetts, (evincing on this and several other occasions, a great deal more jealousy of the other Colonies, than became her own great superiority in numbers), in 1648 propounded, through a committee of the General Court, a number of points of enquiry to the commissioners, one of which was expressed in the following terms.

'In such cases of civil nature, where the commissioners may

* Hazard II. p. 21.

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have power to make orders,—yet not to have power to make general officers of a civil nature to execute such order, but the same to be executed by the officers of such jurisdictions as shall be concerned therein, and if such jurisdiction or Colony shall not submit, and perform, &c. after due admonition, then to be responsible to the other Colonies for breach of league and covenant, and to be declared what further power the commissioners have in such cases; or what will be fit to be done in case any Colony should change their religion professed, &c.'

To the limitations on their power, suggested in this article, the commissioners reply, in the following manner:

'Though the commissioners consider and order in the public concernments of the Colonies, within the compass of their trust and power contained in the articles; as in all treaties concerning peace and war, sending messengers, appointing generals, and other officers for war, when all the Colonies are interested, appointing the numbers of men, ordering provision and charges necessary for the service, giving commissions, taking accounts concerning offenders, and all things of a like nature, which are the proper concomitants or consequents of such a consideration, —yet the execution to belong to the jurisdiction wherein the commissioners sit, or where the offender is or may be found, and to the magistrates or other inferior officers; but so that if the magistrates or the officers do deny or delay execution, in any case proper to the commissioners' cognizance, and wherein the other Colonies are interested and may suffer,—such jurisdiction to be responsible for breach of covenant; but what shall be done in such case, or in case any Colony should change their religion professed, they conceive cannot be now so well resolved, as when the case in the compass and in all the circumstances shall be considered.' *

This rude and primitive project of a confederation had nearly gone to pieces, on the question of paying duties at Saybrook fort. After a severe contestation of this question, between Massachusetts and Connecticut, it was happily settled by the accidental burning of the fort; and the Confederacy was left to exert a highly beneficial influence, in defending its members against the enemies within their borders and the adjacent provinces. At length, however, under the gloomy reign of James the Second, it perished in the general wreck of the charters.

* Hazard, II. 108,—115.

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The Revolution in England formed an era in the history of the American Colonies. Their vacated charters were to be renewed, and rendered more conformable to their condition and the experience acquired under the earlier patents. Massachusetts, then the most important of the Colonies, put at rest by a liberal charter, enlarged by the accession of Plymouth and a quiet confirmation of her title to Maine, rose to new strength and consideration. New York, having effectually thrown off the Dutch yoke, received her first royal governor in 1619, and was already designated, by her position, and conveniences of internal communication, as a proper centre of military and political influence. Pennsylvania, after several unsuccessful modifications of her charter, received it in 1701, in the form in which it lasted till the Revolution. The power and influence of Massachusetts and the other New England Colonies were counterbalanced by the growth of Virginia and the other Southern Colonies; and an effectual foundation of colonial empire was evidently laid. The population of the different colonies in 1701, as computed by Dr. Humphreys, secretary of the Society for propagating the Gospel among the Indians, was as follows:*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Massachusetts, | 70,000 | New York, | 30,000 |
| Connecticut, | 30,000 | E. and W. Jersey, | 15,000 |
| Rhode Island, | 10,000 | Pennsylvania, | 20,000 |
| New Hampshire, | 10,000 | Maryland, | 25,000 |
| | | Virginia, | 40,000 |
| New England, | 120,000 | N. Carolina, | 5,000 |
| | | S. Carolina, | 7,000 |
| | | | 142,000 |
| Middle and Southern Colonies, | 142,000 | | |
| | 262,000 | | |

It was natural, under this state of things, and in the new condition of the government of the mother country, that enlarged projects for the Colonies should suggest themselves to the minds of reflecting men, and to those intrusted with the control of affairs. Dr. Davenant, in a discourse on the plan-

* Holmes's Annals, Vol. II. p. 537, where the authorities are given on which this statement is founded.

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tation trade, published in 1698, has preserved the outlines of a plan of government for the British Colonies in America, which we presume to have been the first suggestion of the kind.* Whether it partook in any degree of an official character, or engaged any serious attention on the part of the ministry, does not appear from the allusion to it in Dr. Davenant's work. His own position, as Commissioner of Excise and Inspector General of exports and imports, with his popularity as a writer on politics and trade, gives considerable interest to this project and his commentary upon it. The plan contemplated a Congress of the Colonies, to be composed of two deputies from each, over which a commissioner, appointed by the Crown, was to preside. The functions of this Congress, as stated by Dr. Davenant, were to hear and adjust all matters of complaint and difference between Province and Province, as

1. When persons quit their own Province and go to another that they may avoid their just debts, though able to pay them.
2. When offenders fly justice, or justice cannot well be had upon such offenders in the Provinces that entertain them.
3. To prevent or redress injuries in point of commerce.
4. To consider of ways and means to support the union and safety of the Provinces, against their common enemies, in which Congress the quotas of men and charges would be much easier allotted and proportioned, than it was possible for any establishment made in England to do; for the Provinces, knowing their own condition and one another's, could debate that matter with more freedom and satisfaction, and better adjust and balance their affairs in all respects, for their common safety.

In time of war, the royal commissioner was to be general or chief commander of the several quotas, upon such service against the common enemy, as should be thought advisable for the good and benefit of the whole.'

Mr. Pitkin, after citing these provisions of the plan for an American Congress, contained in the works of Dr. Davenant, justly exclaims: 'Thus early did British statesmen contemplate a constitution or confederation of the Colonies to manage their general concerns, as *best knowing their own condition and circumstances.*'†

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* Davenant's works, Vol. I. 41, 42.

† Pitkin's Political and Civil History of the United States of America, Vol. I. p. 142.

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We are not aware, that any further traces of this project exist in the political annals of the Colonies.

Fifty years passed away;—a half century of great vicissitudes at home and abroad. The Colonies had steadily increased. In the war of 1744, they had made themselves known and felt in Europe. At the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, England had nothing but Louisburg to go with into the great market of European negotiation. After a few years of restless armistice, another contest was impending. The actual possession of the region northwest of the Ohio, was to be struggled for. In 1753 the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, by order of the King, addressed a letter to the Governor of New York, requiring him to notify the Governors of Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts Bay, and New Hampshire, to attend a meeting at Albany, with a view to a negotiation with the Six Nations of Indians, whom the French were strenuously exerting themselves to gain over to their interests. In the commission of the delegates from Massachusetts it is also stated, that they were appointed for the purpose (in addition to the object already mentioned) of 'entering into articles of union and confederation with the aforesaid governments, for the general defence of his Majesty's subjects and interests in North America, as well in time of peace as of war.' The Colonies, not specially named, were also to be invited by the Governor of New York to attend the meeting. Virginia and New Jersey, though specially named in the instructions from England, did not send deputies. Connecticut and Rhode Island, on the other hand, though not expressly named, appointed deputies. Hutchinson justly observes of this assembly, 'that it was the most deserving of respect of any which had been convened in America, whether we consider the Colonies which were represented, the rank and character of the delegates, or the purposes for which it was convened.'*

The importance of this project may justify us in repeating the names of the delegates: they were as follows:

*New York.*—Joseph Murray, William Johnson, John Chambers, William Smith.

*New Hampshire.*—Theodore Atkinson, Richard Willard, Meshech Weare, Henry Sherburne.

* Hutchinson's History of Massachusetts Bay. Vol. III. p. 20.



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*Massachusetts.*—Samuel Welles, John Chandler, Oliver Patridge, Thomas Hutchinson, John Worthington.

*Connecticut.*—William Pitkin, Roger Wolcott, Elisha Williams.

*Rhode Island.*—Stephen Hopkins, Martin Howard.

*Maryland.*—Benjamin Tasker, Benjamin Barms.

*Pennsylvania.*—John Penn, Isaac Norris, Benjamin Franklin, Richard Peters.

Among the manuscript treasures of the Massachusetts Historical Society, is the hitherto unpublished journal of the proceedings of this Congress,* a transcript of which is before us. It contains the credentials of the commissioners of the several Provinces, and the journal of their proceedings in Convention at Albany. It is full upon the subject of the negotiation with the Six Nations, containing at length the addresses made to them, and their replies. On the subject of the plan of union, the journal contains only the names of the committee by whom it was prepared, with occasional notices of the discussion of their report. This committee was designated by the nomination of one, by the deputies from each Province, and consisted of the following members, viz.

Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts Bay,
Theodore Atkinson of New Hampshire,
William Pitkin of Connecticut,
Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island,
Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania,
Benjamin Tasker of Maryland.

The plan of union, agreed to by this Convention, was drawn up by Dr. Franklin.† His works contain the plan, with the reasons separately stated for each article, and some general considerations applicable to the expediency of the whole. It may also be found in Minot's Continuation, in Trumbull's history of Connecticut (incorrectly), and in several other histories.‡

* Probably the same which is referred to by Belknap as 'Atkinson's MS.' Belknap's New-Hampshire, Vol. I. p. 309. Farmer's Edition.

† Franklin's Works, London Ed. III. 1.

‡ Minot's Continuation, Vol. I. p. 191. Trumbull's History of Connecticut, Vol. II. Appendix. The second article providing for a President General is here omitted. Pitkin's Political and Civil History of the United States, Vol. I. Appendix p. 429. Franklin's Works, Vol. IV. p. 5—38. Philad. Ed. 1809.

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It was deemed necessary in the outset, that an act of Parliament should pass, 'by which one general government should be formed in America,' 'within and under which government each Colony may retain its present constitution, except in the particulars wherein a change should be directed by the said act.'

This new government was to be administered by a President General, to be appointed and supported by the Crown, and a grand council, to be chosen by the representatives of the people of the several Colonies, met in their respective assemblies.

The first Grand Council was to be apportioned as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Massachusetts Bay, | 7 | New Jersey, | 3 |
| New Hampshire, | 2 | Pennsylvania, | 6 |
| Connecticut, | 5 | Maryland, | 4 |
| Rhode Island, | 2 | Virginia, | 7 |
| New York, | 4 | North Carolina | 4 |
| | — | South Carolina, | 4 |
| | 20 | | — |
| | | | 28 |
| | | | 20 |
| | | | — |
| | | | 48 |

The first meeting was to be convened in the city of Philadelphia.

We are tempted to quote the reasons, stated by Dr. Franklin, for fixing on Philadelphia as the place of meeting for the Grand Council.

'Philadelphia was named as being the nearer the centre of the Colonies, where the commissioners would be well and cheaply accommodated. The high roads through the whole extent are for the most part very good, in which forty or fifty miles a day may very well be, and frequently are travelled. Great part of the way may likewise be gone by water. In summer time the passages are frequently performed in a week from Charleston (S. C.) to Philadelphia and New York; and from Rhode Island to New York, through the Sound, in two or three days; and from New York to Philadelphia by water and land in two days, by stage-boats and wheel carriages, that set out every other day. The journey from Charleston to Philadelphia may likewise be facilitated by boats running up Chesapeake bay three hundred miles. But if the whole journey be performed on horseback, the

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most distant members (viz. the two from New Hampshire and from South Carolina), may probably render themselves at Philadelphia, in fifteen or twenty days; the majority may be there in much less time.'

The members of the Grand Council were chosen for three years. After the first choice, and when the proportion of money which each Colony was to pay to the general treasury, should be ascertained, a new apportionment was to be made of the members of the council, in the ratio of taxation; but no Province was to have more than seven members, nor less than two.

There was to be an annual meeting of the council; but extra sessions could be called by the President, with the consent of seven of the members, and timely notice to the whole.

The members of the Grand Council chose their own Speaker; and it could not be dissolved, prorogued, nor continued in session longer than six weeks, at one time, without its own consent or the special command of the Crown.

The members of the Grand Council were to be allowed ten shillings sterling *per diem* during their session, and journey to and from the place of meeting; twenty miles to be reckoned a day's journey.

All acts of the Grand Council required the signature of the President to give them validity, and he was charged with their execution.

The President General, with the advice of the Grand Council, was to hold and direct all Indian treaties, in which the general interest of the Colonies was concerned; and make peace, or declare war with the Indian nations.

The President and Council to make such laws as they judged necessary for regulating the Indian trade, to make all purchases from Indians for the Crown, of lands, not now within the bounds of particular Colonies; or that shall not be within their bounds, *when some of them are reduced to more convenient dimensions.*

They were to make new settlements, or such purchases, granting title in the King's name, reserving a quit rent to the Crown, for the use of the general treasury. They were also to make laws for the government of such settlements, till the Crown shall think fit to form them into particular governments. Hutchinson remarks on this head, that he cannot ascertain precisely what Colonies were referred to, as those which might

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be reduced within more convenient dimensions:—but he presumes Connecticut and Virginia to have been two of them. This no doubt was the case. The article in question throws light upon the disposition which existed to question the validity of the claim, set up by several of the Colonies to an indefinite extension westward. The blow here menaced against her western domain, supposing Connecticut to have been one of the Colonies alluded to, will perhaps aid in explaining the great anxiety of this Colony, to prevent the adoption of the plan of Union. No Colony exerted itself more strenuously to that end, than Connecticut.

In addition to the powers already enumerated, the Grand Council were to raise and pay soldiers, and build forts for the defence of any of the Colonies, equip vessels of war to guard the coasts and protect the trade upon the ocean, lakes and great rivers; *but not to impress men in any Colony without the consent of the Legislature.*

For the purposes enumerated, they had power to make laws, and lay and levy such general duties, imposts or taxes, as to them shall appear most equal and just, (considering the ability and other circumstances of the inhabitants in the several Colonies), and such as may be collected with the least inconvenience to the people; rather discouraging luxury, than loading industry with unnecessary burdens.

They were to appoint a general treasurer, and particular treasurers in each government when necessary; no money to be paid except to the joint order of the President and Council, unless when provided for by standing law to be paid to the order of the President alone.

The accounts were to be annually settled and reported to the several colonial assemblies.

A quorum of the Grand Council, competent to act with the President, was to consist of twenty-five members; among whom was to be one or more from a majority of the Colonies.

The laws passed by the Grand Council were not to be repugnant to the laws of England, but as near as possible in harmony with them, and were to be transmitted to England for the approbation of the King in council, and if not disapproved within three years after presentation, *remained* in force.

On the death of the President General, the speaker of the Grand Council succeeded to his place, till the King's pleasure was known.

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All military officers, by land and sea, were to be nominated by the President General, and confirmed by the council;—all civil officers to be nominated by the council and confirmed by the President. In case of death or removal of any officer, civil or military, '*under this Constitution*,' the Governor of the Province in which the vacancy happened, was to fill it, till the pleasure of the President General and Grand Council should be known.

The particular military and civil establishments of each Colony were to remain in their former condition, notwithstanding the general Constitution;—and each Colony, on emergency, was authorized to defend itself and lay the expense before the President and council for allowance.

Such was this celebrated plan of Union. Dr. Belknap observes, that it is worthy of remark, that this plan for the Union of the Colonies was agreed to on the fourth day of July; 'exactly twenty-two years before the declaration of American Independence;' and this observation has been repeated by several other writers. We are loth to disturb the credit of an association of events so pleasing; but truth compels us to say, that it is without foundation in fact. We do not find the date of this instrument in any printed document, nor is it contained in the manuscript journal already alluded to. We find, however, in that journal, under date of the 10th of July, the following entry:—'Mr. Franklin reported in a new form the draught of a plan of a Union, agreeably to the determination of yesterday, which was read paragraph by paragraph and debated, and the further consideration of it deferred till the afternoon.' 'In the afternoon the consideration of the plan of the Union was re-assumed, which is as follows:'—It would appear certain from this record, that it had not been adopted on the 10th of July.

It is plain to see, in this plan, a near approach to an efficient remedy for some of the evils of the country. It is idle to speculate on what might have been the effect of its adoption. Not a Colony approved it at home, and in England it met with no favor from the government.

The assembly of Connecticut passed a strong resolution against it, on the grounds that the country was too large for such a government, and that a defensive war carried on by it would prove ruinously burdensome to the Colonies. They also feared that, in the course of time, it might 'be dangerous

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and hurtful to his Majesty's interest, and tend to subvert the liberties and privileges, and to discourage the industry of his Majesty's good subjects, inhabiting the Colonies.' The agent of this Colony in London was directed to oppose the plan with the greatest vigor, to demand a hearing against it by council before Parliament, should it there be discussed, and adopt any measures he might think necessary to prevent its receiving the royal sanction. The assembly further resolved, 'that the Governor should watch all the steps, which the other governments should take relative to the said plan; that he should prepare whatever might be necessary for its prevention; that he should urge any further reasons against it, which his own mind might suggest; that he would suggest alterations in various parts, particularly that the government should be lessened and divided into two districts;—that the proportions allotted to each Colony were unjust; and that he would show in what respects the liberties of the people would be infringed; that he would prepare the evidence of the facts and send them to the agent, with whatever else might be necessary on the subject.'* We have already suggested a consideration, which may have animated the zeal of the people of Connecticut in opposing this plan of Union. A general impression throughout the Colonies no doubt was, that an organized plan of raising a colonial revenue, to defray the expense of the wars which might be carried on, would be very apt to interfere with the claims for reimbursement, which had heretofore been presented to the British Parliament, and allowed. The consequence would be a great aggravation of the evils of their present political condition, already sufficiently disadvantageous, in being dragged into the contest, whenever the great powers of Europe found it for their interest to go to war. The flower of two generations in the Colonies had perished in the wars of France and England; and if, in addition to calamities of this character, the whole financial burden of carrying on the contest were to be thrown upon the Colonies, it was plain that effectual and not very tardy ruin would ensue.

But these and all other apprehensions, which the plan of 1754 may have inspired, passed away with the entire failure of that project to take effect. The time had not yet arrived. Union was destined to be the fruit of Independence, connected

* Trumbull's History of Connecticut. Vol. II. p. 337.

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with it indissolubly and reciprocally as cause and effect. Nothing but an arduous struggle for independence, with its attendant perils and extremities, could have conquered the centrifugal tendency of thirteen Colonies, jealous of their separate rights. Nothing but Union would have sufficed as a permanent and safe basis of independence; and it is doubtful whether it is less important now, in this respect, than at the period of the Revolution.

Accordingly, with the commencement of the revolutionary war, the attention of the Federal Congress was turned to a confederation of the States. Before proceeding to the discussion of this subject, Mr. Justice Story devotes a most interesting chapter to the History of the Revolution. In this chapter (Book II. chap. I.), the interesting topic of *sovereignty* is most ably treated, and great light is thrown on some of the agitating questions of the present day. With this introduction, we are led to the history of the formation of the Confederation, the fourth of the projects or plans for a Union of the States, of the three former of which we have had something to say in this article. This is followed by an analysis of the articles of confederation themselves, and an accurate statement of the powers which it granted and withheld. The succeeding chapter, on the decline and fall of the Confederation, is full of instruction. The usual considerations under this head are arrayed in strong light, and others of a less familiar character are introduced. Let any man, who reflects upon the all-important functions to be discharged by a judiciary, capable of carrying its decrees into effect, pardon the condition of things adverted to in the following paragraph.

'A striking illustration of the weakness of the Confederacy may be found in our juridical history. The power of appeal in prize causes, as an incident to the sovereign powers of peace and war, was asserted by Congress, after the most elaborate consideration, and supported by the voice of ten States, antecedent to the ratification of the articles of confederation. The exercise of that power was, however, resisted by the State courts, notwithstanding its immense importance to the preservation of the rights of independent neutral nations. The Confederation gave, in express terms, this right of appeal. The decrees of the Court of Appeals were equally resisted; and, in fact, they remained a dead letter, till they were enforced by the Courts of the United States under the present confederation.' *

* Story's Commentaries, Vol. I. p. 230.

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The weakness of the Judiciary under the Confederation may be sufficiently judged of by the faint tradition of those, who administered that department of the government, and the meagre records of their labors. Of the military and parliamentary history of the Revolution, and the period which followed it, up to 1789, we have some documentary history; and the names of the generals and statesmen, who stood at the head of affairs, are familiar to our ears. But who can tell us much about the Federal jurisprudence of the same period, fruitful as that period must have been in all the elements of an important admiralty and prize system?

Although it is obviously impossible for us to go very particularly into the analysis of the contents of these chapters, we cannot forbear making a quotation of a short section of the chapter immediately before us, and which deserves to be well weighed by every citizen of the United States, who respects the authority of the great men, who framed and contemporaneously expounded the Constitution.

'The last defect which seems worthy of enumeration is, that the Confederation never had a ratification of the PEOPLE. Upon this objection it will be sufficient to quote a single passage from the same celebrated work, (Federalist, No. 22.) as it affords a very striking commentary upon some extraordinary doctrines recently promulgated. "Resting upon no better foundation than the consent of the State Legislatures, it has been exposed to frequent and intricate questions concerning the validity of its powers; and has in some instances given birth to the erroneous doctrine of a right of legislative repeal. Owing its ratification to a law of a State, it has been contended that the same authority might repeal the law by which it was ratified. However gross a heresy it may be to maintain, that a party to a compact has a right to revoke that compact, the doctrine itself has had respectable advocates. The possibility of a question of this nature proves the necessity of laying the foundations of our national government deeper than the mere sanction of delegated authority. The fabric of American Empire ought to rest on the solid basis of THE CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE. The streams of national power ought to flow immediately from that pure original fountain of all legitimate authority."'

Having thus opened the way, Mr. Justice Story relates the history of the formation of the Constitution. A chapter on the objections to it follows. To this succeeds a discussion of the nature of the Constitution,—whether it be a *compact*.



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This is one of the most able, luminous, and valuable chapters of the work. The whole artillery of constitutional law, on this great topic of present interest, is brought out with masterly skill and power; and the politician, who knows nothing of his calling, but how to inflame popular feeling on topics of local interest, may read this chapter and learn how mean his occupation is.

And here begins the great business of this work, not indeed, that the previous chapters are not of close connexion with its main subject, and some of them, in fact, not inferior in present interest and seasonableness. But in this discussion of the question, whether the Constitution is a compact or a government, we enter the great temple of constitutional law. A chapter on 'the Final Interpreter' follows, and this is succeeded by another on the Rules of Interpretation. Having gone through with these preliminary inquiries,—preliminary not as of less than essential importance, but as applying to the whole Constitution and all its parts,—Mr. Justice Story takes up his commentary on the instrument itself, and beginning with its Preamble, goes through with every article, section and paragraph.

We have already intimated, that a work of this kind,—itself a review of the Constitution, almost bids defiance to all attempts at a complete analytical review of itself. At all events, we feel ourselves incompetent to the undertaking, particularly in the limited space which remains to us. Suffice it to say, that it is a work whose value must be learned by the student of constitutional law, by the politician, and by the intelligent American citizen, from a careful and repeated perusal of the volumes. Had we been called upon to designate the individual, for the honorable and laborious task of preparing a Commentary on the Constitution, we should have designated Mr. Justice Story.

It is of course the first qualification for a constitutional commentator, that he should be of sound principles. We hope never to see the day, when our highest judicial functionaries shall be claimed as belonging to any of the parties, which distract our republic. Still, however, it is impossible that public men should grow up in a career of active usefulness, without having had their party associations. Mr. Justice Story was of the democratic party, and shared the general views of that party, on questions of constitutional politics; but with a

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mind of too *legal* a cast, to run into wild revolutionary extremes. Coming upon the bench with prepossessions of the character intimated, Mr. Justice Story rose immediately above the sphere of party; and with the ermine of office, put on the sacred robe of the Constitution and the Law. Henceforward it became his duty, his desire, his effort, neither to strain the Constitution, nor to travel round it, on the loose popular maxims which guide the partisan; but to interpret it with impartiality, and administer it with firmness. In a word, he became a constitutional lawyer of the school of Marshall; and nowhere can a more authentic, comprehensive, and instructive exposition of the principles of that school, in their entire application to the Constitution, be found, than in these volumes.

To this vital qualification for the work, Mr. Justice Story has superadded others, rarely to be found united and made available for such an undertaking. His position as a magistrate has secured a moderation of statement and a caution in laying down principles, highly desirable in a work, which is to impart to the youth of the country those impressions relative to the Constitution, which are to go with them in many cases through life. Nothing would have been more out of place, in such a work, than a controversial tone and manner; and no guarantee against even the unconscious assumption of such a tone and manner is so likely to prove effectual, as the restraint of the judicial office.

Lastly, a work like the Commentaries on the Constitution could scarcely be accomplished, in a becoming manner, except by an individual, uniting to all the other qualifications, those of an almost boundless reading, professional, historical, political and miscellaneous; and a happy talent of extracting, from a heterogeneous mass, the sequence and consent of truth. It is impossible to go through these volumes without feeling, that, from the first frail New England Confederacy of 1643 down to the ratification of the Federal Constitution in 1789, Union, Union, Union is the great destiny of our country. This is the lesson to be learned, and the truth to be evolved through a continuous investigation of the most laborious and often perplexing character:—and the true prophet of our political dispensation is he, that can most clearly discern it, when it is faintly indicated, and most powerfully support it, when it is plausibly assailed. Mr. Justice Story's Commentaries have brought to its illustration a world of well-digested learning;

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and furnish the most satisfactory general refutation of the detached essays, which perverted ingenuity is ever able to dress up in defence of any paradox, however amazing. We rejoice in its appearance;—in its appearance at this crisis. Earnestly do we desire, that it may perform the salutary office of aiding to win back the judgments of our Southern brethren to the sound doctrines of 1789. It seems impossible to us to resist the conviction, that the theories, which have been recently broached, carry us back to the rude and abortive confederacies and plans of confederacies of other days. Well may that doctrine be called Nullification, in which the experience of two centuries goes for nothing, and in which the sole and express object for framing the Constitution is set at nought.

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ART. IV.—*The Whale Fishery.*

1. *An Account of the Arctic Regions, with a History and Description of the Northern Whale Fishery.* By WM. SCORESBY, Jr. F. R. S. E. In two volumes. Edinburgh. 1820.
2. *Journal of a Voyage to the Northern Whale Fishery, including Researches and Discoveries on the Eastern Coast of West Greenland, made in the Summer of* 1822. By WM. SCORESBY, Jr. F. R. S. E. Edinburgh. 1823.
3. *Discovery and Adventure in the Polar Seas and Regions, with an Account of the Whale Fishery.* Harper's Family Library, No. 14. New York. 1833.
4. *Scientific Tracts.* Nos. 18 & 24.—*Whale Fishery.* Boston. 1833.

FROM the legends and chronicles of the inhabitants of the Northern shores and islands of Europe, we learn that they have always depended upon the whale for much of their employment and subsistence. Among them all, and among the Esquimaux of North America, we discover rude implements and canoes for capturing the huge monster. Those of our readers who have read the 'Pirate,' will recollect with what a hearty zeal the Zetlanders engaged in capturing a stranded

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whale, and they will not be shocked when we remind them, that the old Udaller, the father of the musing Minna, and the lively Brenda, was a whaler. In those Northern regions, when the season returns, an interest is manifested in enterprises of this nature, as though existence itself depended on the issue. At this we need not wonder. The flesh of the whale, which resembles coarse beef, is a necessary article of food. It affords a thin transparent substance, which answers the purpose of window glass, and the sinews, when properly separated, are used for thread. The common bones are employed in building the hut, the whalebone in finishing canoes and rude instruments, and the remainder is no despicable material for fuel. Besides, train oil and oleaginous matter of all kinds, are more grateful to the taste of the natives of these regions, than the choicest delicacies to a refined people. The reindeer is no greater blessing to the Laplander,—nor does the palm supply to the native of the tropical clime, a greater variety for his comfort and support, than does the whale to these Northern tribes. When, after being immured in the depths of winter for nine or ten months in the year, they at length emerge from the tombs of the living, the utmost activity is often displayed in preparation for a fishing voyage; and when all is ready, mothers and children, and old men, gather on the shore at the parting. When the seamen return, after an interval of many days, laden with the fruits of their successful but desperate exertion, transport is visible in the actions and visages of all, no less heartfelt and expressive, than that which was demonstrated by the bells of Lerwick when Parry returned in safety from one of his perilous but brilliant voyages.

The Biscayans appear to have been the first Europeans, who systematically and extensively pursued the whale fishery. The Northmen, who, after a long career of ravage and plunder, at length settled along the western shores of Europe, are said to have introduced it. The same descriptions of whale gear and instruments are now used, that were employed by the Biscayans in the fifteenth century, and the same methods of capture are practised. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, they became bold and adventurous, and straying as far as the coast of Iceland, they found there a Norwegian colony, disposed to unite in their enterprises. Their fleet soon numbered fifty or sixty sail of vessels.

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Before the enthusiasm first roused by the brilliant successes of Columbus had subsided, the Dutch and English made many most calamitous attempts to reach the Indies by a north-east passage. In penetrating those icy regions, they met with vast numbers of whales,—undisturbed for centuries in their peculiar and exclusive seas, tame, sluggish, and disposed to yield as ready captives to the intruder. The navigators determined to unite profit with adventure, and although they might fail in obtaining, by their imagined passage, the spices of India, to bring home at least in their vessels the products of the bear, the walrus, the seal and the whale. From being only the incidental, these soon became the principal objects of these hazardous voyages, and the high hopes of men, panting for the lofty names of discoverers, were merged in the arduous toils of catching whales for profit.

The subject does not seem to have assumed any great commercial importance, till the seventeenth century. The first voyage, made for the sole purpose of whale fishing by the English, was about the year 1610. An Amsterdam and a London company soon sent out numerous fleets to Spitzbergen. Other nations of Europe commenced also at the same time. As each nation claimed the right to the whale grounds, frequent contests for sole possession rendered the voyages profitless and disastrous. The ships* went out in small squadrons, and had all the necessary naval preparations for plunder or defence. The English especially assumed quite a piratical character, and relied more upon the plunder of the interlopers, as they called the rest, than on their own honest and watchful exertions. After many years of silly and obstinate contention, an arrangement was made, by which the most eligible seas along the coast of Spitzbergen were divided among the English, Dutch, Hamburghers, French and Spaniards.

* In the library of the Antiquarian Society at Worcester, is a MS. narrative of one of these voyages, entitled 'A short discourse of a Voyage made in the year of our Lord 1613, to the late discovered countrye of Greenland, and a briefe description of the same countrie, and the comodities ther raised to the adventurers.' The expedition was commanded by Benjamin Joseph of London, who is dignified as 'chief captaine.' In one place the three highest in command are called 'Admirall,' 'Vice Admirall' and 'rere Admirall.' The fleet consisted of seven armed ships, provided with '24 Basks,' (Basques, Biscayans,) 'who were best experienced in that facultie of whale striking.' During the voyage, the fleet met with about twenty-five sail of vessels.

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Subsequently to this division, the English Muscovy Company pursued the business successfully for a few years, but after a time their fleets gradually disappeared, and they finally deserted the northern oceans. A spell seems to have been cast upon all their operations; for while they were unfortunate year after year successively, the economical and calculating Dutch were annually rewarded with rich cargoes. They were obliged to renounce the business to these formidable rivals, who carried it forward with the same vigor and perseverance which they had displayed in all other commercial enterprises. At first, on their portion of the shores, the Dutch found the whales inert, passive and abundant. They formed a summer colony on the shore, for the purpose of extracting and preparing the oil from the blubber which the vessels brought in. Here, on the snowy waste, the little village of Smeerenberg relieved the dull monotony of death. A sight unseen before, the curling of smoke and the ringing of bells announced that man had taken possession, where nature had seemed to threaten a total extinction of animal existence. During the whole of the seventeenth century, the business gradually extended, and two hundred vessels, of various kinds and sizes, were frequently floating in the harbor of Smeerenberg. At length the whales became shy and intractable, and it was found necessary to push out into the open sea, and there engage in the fearful encounter. As they advanced into the open ocean, the scene of their toil became nearly as distant from their colony as from home, and they at length deemed it expedient to relinquish the intermediate station, and return with their cargoes directly to Holland. Not a vestige of this village is now to be seen.

It would be tedious and uninstructive, to follow in slow detail the fluctuations of this precarious business. Suffice it to say, that for more than a hundred years, the English hardly maintained a whale ship, while the Dutch and Hamburghers annual-

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The commander exacted from all strange ships heavy contributions of oil and fins. At one time, preparation was made for action with five large ships in Belsound, the largest of which was of eight hundred tons burthen, commanded by Michael de Aristiga of St. John de Luz. The MS. is beautifully written, and the natural history of the 'new countrie' is illustrated by well drawn pictures. The expedition was fitted out at the 'charge and adventure of the Right Worshipfull Sir Thomas Smyth, knight, and the rest of the companie of Merchants tradeing into Moscouia, called the merchants of Newe Trades and Discoueries.'

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ly, down to 1778, were employing a fleet of more than 200 vessels. During a part of the intermediate time, they employed as many as 300 vessels, and 18,000 men. The pride of their government was at length aroused, and stimulated by high bounties and high hopes, the English again became competitors. Their attempts, under the name of the Greenland Company and the South Sea Company, had proved abortive and ruinous. Between 1732 and 1749, the bounty had risen to 40*s.* per ton, at which it remained permanent for the remainder of the century. This was a new era in British fishery. Up to 1785, the average number of British whalers frequenting Greenland and Davis's Straits was about sixty. During the four following years it received an unprecedented increase, for in 1788, two hundred and fifty-three vessels were employed. The whale fleets of Holland were swallowed in the tremendous vortex of the French Revolution, leaving England to maintain more vessels in the Greenland seas, than all the other nations of Europe besides. It should be observed, that previously to this time, nearly all the maritime States of Europe had been at different periods engaged in the business, to a greater or less extent.

The English at first prosecuted the trade from their metropolis, but, selecting more eligible ports, from time to time, we find the whale squadrons now chiefly sailing from Hull and Whitby in England, and Peterhead, Aberdeen, Dundee and Leith in Scotland. The active and eager pursuit has driven the monsters from their old haunts, across the Atlantic. Vigilantly pursued among the Greenland channels, they have taken refuge in Davis's Straits and Baffin's Bay, and these are now the exclusive fields of the Greenland Fishery. In this fishery, for the eight years previous to 1818, one hundred and thirty ships were employed, but the fleet is now diminished to about ninety.

In following the history of this perilous and desperate mode of hardy industry, our attention is so enchained by dangers, storms and misery endured, as well as by the exhibition of the grandest spectacles with which nature gratifies the vision of man, that our curiosity is hardly aroused to a consideration of it as a source of national wealth. Here let us pause, to consider for a moment the perils of cold, of famine, of tempest and shipwreck, that are incident to these exhibitions. We must recollect, that the cruise is generally beyond the 70th parallel of

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latitude. Exposed as these hardy mariners are to cold and danger and every imaginable hardship, success seems no flattering incentive. Obliged to sail among islands and mountains of ice, it requires all their watchfulness and dexterity to elude the besetting dangers. The masts and shrouds are often glazed with ice, —their cables of hemp or iron are snapped asunder like pipe stems, and benumbed as they must continually be, they thus navigate the ocean for months. We can imagine the common dangers that beset them; but who can picture their situation, when darkness makes the storm more awful, and their emotions more intense? The ship rises upon a mountain wave, and plunges into a chasm, perhaps to strike upon a mass of ice. After a disruption of those immense icy fields, which cover the arctic regions, it requires all the seamen's skill to thread the passages. Sometimes, detained late in the season, they get imbedded in the shoals of ice, and have been thus compelled to endure the long northern winter. They perhaps drift onward far towards the pole. The days gradually shorten, the sun makes a short segment above the horizon, finally a small portion of his disk appears, and the next day he is gone to leave the world 'herbless, treeless, lifeless.' Without any of those comforts, those furnaces, and preparations for mental excitement, which made the winterings of Ross and Parry more tolerable, they have patiently waited, month after month, till the breaking up of the following season. Perhaps they go out for game, and one of the crew finds himself in the embrace of a huge bear, and the mangled corpse only of a comrade is rescued after a desperate engagement, rendered more fierce, as the bear is more raging and ravenous from a month of fasting.

Sometimes, vessel after vessel has been dashed to atoms, and the few remnants of many crews that have gone down to the fathomless abysses are obliged to crowd into a single ship, already perhaps short of provisions, or into a few small boats, and push for a northern shore. And what awaits them there? If too late to reach the ship, or the settlement of more civilized man, divided among a savage tribe, they may possibly survive till spring in filthy huts, where the condensed moisture falls in flakes of snow, upon the admission of cold by an aperture. Happily they often experience a hospitality, among those rude people, which they have looked for in vain among a more cultivated race. If not so fortunate as to land where they see the vestiges of



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man, they must erect as competent a hovel as their slender means will admit, and make use of every expedient to sustain the vital energies. Sometimes they survive and are rescued; and the almost incredible tale is told of four Russian sailors, who were preserved through six of these dreary winters, three of whom finally returned to their homes. Some of them are taken off, but how many perish in convulsions, before the extremity of cold is set in! How many fall a prey to the famished wolf! How many suffer miseries untold, because unseen! These are not the suggestions of fancy. The Dutch endeavored, in the early days of the fishery, to establish a settlement on one of these bleak coasts, if practicable. They left several men to try the experiment of wintering. In the following summer, a boat landed on the coast, and found the hut strongly closed. They forced it open. It was a tomb. All had perished,—four men were found frozen,—and on the last page of their journal was written,—'We are all four stretched on our beds, and are still alive, and would eat willingly, if any one of us were able to rise and light a fire. We implore the Almighty, with folded hands, to deliver us from this life, which it is impossible for us to prolong without food, or any thing to warm our frozen limbs. None of us can help the other,—each must support his own misery.' We can only realize the extremity of their situation by recurring to a horrible description of the poet.

> "They lifted up their eyes and then beheld
> Each other's aspects,—saw, and shrieked and died.
> Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
> Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
> Famine had written fiend."

We have testimony enough that such calamities have befallen our fellow-creatures in these regions. Many must have suffered and perished, whose sufferings and end there were no survivors to relate. It is but just to say, however, that for the period of a century, previous to 1778, the number of ships, entirely lost, did not amount to four in a hundred. The fishing was mostly pursued in the Greenland seas; and pursued with more certainty and safety, than it has been since the whalers have ventured into the depths of Baffin's Bay. Every autumn, the English papers teem again with accounts of remarkable casualties and distresses. For the three seasons

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previous to 1824, one seventh of the fleet was totally lost, and in 1830, one fifth never returned.* When we look back upon the whole history of the fishery, and reflect upon the thousands that have been swallowed up once, and forever, how strictly and peculiarly applicable is the language of Irving! 'They have gone down amidst the roar of the tempest,—their bones lie whitening among the caverns of the deep. Silence, oblivion,—like the waves, have closed over them, and no one can tell the story of their end. What sighs have been wafted after that ship! What prayers have been offered up at the deserted fireside of home! How often has the mistress, the wife, the mother, pored over the daily news, to catch some casual intelligence of this rover of the deep! How has expectation darkened into anxiety,—anxiety into dread,—and dread into despair! Alas! not one memento remains for love to cherish. All that shall ever be known is, that she sailed from her port, and was never heard of more.'

The icebergs are causes of great peril to the Greenland whalemen. They are congelations of fresh water. It is supposed, that as the water pours down from the hills along the coasts, it is frozen in some hollow and the base of the iceberg first formed. Successive years raise it. The snows fall and melt and are frozen on the summit. It rises higher and higher for the greater part of a century, till it emulates in height the tops of the surrounding mountains. Its base, gradually encroaching upon the ocean, is undermined by the current and dashing of the waves. At last it falls with a stupendous plunge into the abyss, and floats triumphantly on

* We have the London Morning Chronicle of Oct. 12, 1830, which recounts the 'disastrous intelligence,' from the fishery of that year, principally as detailed in a Hull paper. 'It is our painful duty this day, to record the loss of *eighteen* ships employed in this fishery, six of which belong to Hull. We do not remember having ever witnessed a more melancholy sight, than that which our streets this morning presented. Hundreds of persons, particularly females, were assembled in groups, anxiously enquiring of each other the news from the fishery, as a report was fast gaining ground, that some casualties had occurred, though no one could form a correct idea of their extent.' Ninety-one British vessels sailed in the spring, of which eighteen were totally and completely lost. The cause of these disasters was a delay of twelve weeks in Melville Bay, while the entrance was blocked with ice, and the danger necessarily encountered in obtaining a voyage after the best of the season was past. Altogether the loss was without precedent.

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the bosom of the Atlantic, till it melts and dissolves away in a milder latitude, after floating for months, a terror to the unhappy mariner who crosses its path. They often rise three hundred feet above the surface; and since experiment shows that only about one seventh of these masses is out of water, some of them must penetrate two thousand feet below. Several whalers are frequently moored at once under the protection of one of these mountains: it is necessary, however, to keep at a respectful distance, for large pieces are frequently detached, and dart upwards with great force. Sometimes the lower portion is dissolved by the warmer temperature of the water, and the mammoth, as if disposed to enjoy his repose more voluptuously, turns slowly and heavily over. Floating on the ocean, no resistance, short of the adamantine shores with which they are familiar, can oppose them. Instances are not unknown of two of these mighty masses coming together with a tremendous crash, and shivering to a thousand atoms the rude bark of the mariner.

The more common kind of drifting field-ice is congealed from ocean water, and is rendered stronger and thicker by the addition of snows and rains. Broken to fragments by storms, the pieces are frequently driven together and piled one upon another. Strong as the most intense cold can rivet and connect it, the iceberg rolls along with apparently no resistance; and dismal is the fate of that crew whose vessel, as if bound by iron in the ice, perceives one of these bearing down and threatening certain destruction.

The fogs and dense atmosphere in these regions make the refracting power so great, that the sun always appears above the horizon long before his due time of return. The moisture, frozen in little *spiculae* as it falls, reflects a thousand ever-varying tints, and exhibits a brilliancy unknown to those who live in a milder zone. Here also is seen the unaccustomed optical illusion, *the mirage*,—a vessel often appearing with the masts downward, and her hull upturned and high raised in air. The *aurora borealis* is seen also with a splendor, which the richest fancy can hardly depict. It flashes over the expanse, till the whole heavens are resplendent with a blaze of light. The bright clouds, wafted hither and thither by every change of the fitful breeze, are said to resemble the evolutions of contending armies, and are looked upon by the rude natives with an awe, that could only arise from their be-

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lief that these are 'the spirits of his fathers roaming through the land of souls.' To make up the dazzling brilliancy of the scene, parrhelia, or mock suns, appear in numbers at a time in different parts of the heavens.

Where is the adequate inducement to incur the certain and inevitable hardships of a Greenland voyage? There have been single voyages perhaps, fraught with as much danger; but never has any great branch of commercial business been pursued so long with such resolute and unabated vigor. We know not where to look for the motive, unless it is found in the same disposition that leads men to engage in games of hazard and lotteries. The pursuit is a lottery. It is a lottery to the seamen as well as to the owners, for they are paid a certain portion of the profits of the voyage, instead of monthly wages. One voyage in a thousand exceeds the most sanguine calculations,—many are moderately successful,—but how many are the *blanks*, has been told in a thousand sad catastrophes. The elder Captain Scoresby, a veteran whaler, went through twenty-eight of these inclement voyages successfully,—he killed 498 whales, yielding 4246 tuns of oil, valued with the whalebone at £150,000. On the other hand, a large portion of the squadron, year after year successively, have met with shipwreck or some cruel disaster. As we have before stated, in 1830, hardly a ship escaped without disheartening losses, and the following year, we believe, brought us accounts that tempestuous weather visited them again with similar calamities. Here we have cause to wonder more at the madness and foolhardiness, than at the undaunted energy of man. It is well, under these circumstances, that in depression the business has always received the sympathy, and in prosperity has never aroused the jealousy of the British government.

Following the history of the Greenland fishery for the last fifty years, it will be perceived that the English fleet has rapidly decreased from about 250 to 90. The ships have not entirely deserted the whale fishery, but have been diverted into other oceans in pursuit of other kinds of whales. They have prosecuted the sperm whale fishery in the Pacific and other oceans; and annually, a fleet, about as numerous as the Greenland fleet, is sent from England into the southern seas. The business is carried on successfully from New Holland and from the British possessions in North America. Altogether the number of British whale ships cannot fall much short of 250

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sail. As a history of one part of the sperm and right whale fisheries in the southern seas is a history of the whole, and the same considerations apply to all, we shall only give a detailed account of *our own* fisheries in those parts of the globe.

To the natural historian, the whale must be a subject of curious and interesting inquiry. Our purpose is to consider him rather as an object of commercial, than scientific speculation; but a proper understanding of the subject in this view, obliges us to give some account of the whale, and the different products for which he is pursued. Scientifically speaking, the whale is not a fish, but is included by naturalists under the class *mammalia*. He is not covered with scales. He is not cold and white blooded like fish, but has an organization of the heart like bipeds and quadrupeds. Like them also he has lungs, and breathes like them the open air. The female nourishes the young from her own milk. Under the *cetaceous* order, are ranked the narwal, the porpoise, the grampus, the dolphin, and various others, which, if not whales, are 'very like a whale.' The walrus, the seal, and sea elephant, seem to hold an intermediate rank between the cetacea and quadrupeds, and are all objects of commercial pursuit. The walrus has a small round head, often bearing a striking resemblance to the human, and hence it has been suggested that in ancient times he has given rise to the fanciful reports of tritons and syrens, and in modern times to the frightful legends of mermen and mermaids. To what order the sea serpent belongs, remains to be proved by a more intimate knowledge of that mysterious inhabitant of the deep. Though we have little doubt of his existence, yet we are disposed to include him in a very extensive order, called *mendacea*. The head of the whale is about one third of the animal, and the open mouth displays a fearful chasm. The tail is not vertical like that of fish, but flat and horizontal. It is broad and muscular, and with it he swims, with it casually or designedly he dashes the boats of the whalemen and disables or kills them. 'But the most unique feature of the whale, is the blow holes or nostrils, which appear like natural *jets d'eau*.' They emit a warm vapor, and where the breathing is vehement a little beneath the surface, water is thrown to the height of twenty or thirty feet in the air, which is crimsoned with blood when the victim is mortally wounded. The sight of this spout, or the loud noise caused by its emission, is the first sign to the whaler of his ap-

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proach. Under the outer hide, to the depth of a foot, extends a fat oleaginous matter, which appears to be a wrapper, designed by nature for protection against intensity of cold. This is cut and torn off by knives and hooks, and furnishes a quantity of oil equal to three quarters of its own bulk. The whale shows the greatest affection for her young. These delicate nurslings, only fourteen or fifteen feet in length, and weighing merely a ton, are often killed for the sole purpose of provoking an encounter with the parent, and then the contest is deadly and desperate. This inoffensive and lethargic creature sometimes displays vivacity and playfulness. Putting himself in a vertical position, the head downwards, with a rapid motion of the tail he leaves the sea in foam and froth. At other times, with a most ludicrous agility, he darts wholly from his element, and the mass, weighing perhaps seventy tons, is seen suspended in the air. If, as a certain philosopher would make us believe, this earth is only a thin uppercrust, it is happy that he alights on so flexible and elastic a medium as water, for such ungainly pranks on land might fracture the surface, and give us, however unwillingly, an inspection of the far famed 'Symmes's hole.' It is perhaps fortunate that mammoths and behemoths are extinct. Such veritable historians as the Gullivers and Munchausens, have gravely asserted that whales have been mistaken for islands, and that cellars have been dug and trees planted upon their backs; but that after some years they have disappeared, giving rise to those otherwise incredible stories of islands swallowed in the deep. If we relied on all their statements, they would fain make us believe that whole families of Nova Zemblans have resided during their long winter in the interior of a whale. Though most marvellous accounts have been always given, the average length of a whale, taking into consideration the various species, does not exceed fifty feet. A species of whale, however, called by the Greenlanders the razorback, has been known to measure one hundred and five feet in length. This is the largest of the whale tribe. It yields but little oil, and is more violent, restive and muscular than the other species. It is seldom seen, and more rarely attacked.

The common, or right whale, *(balaena mysticetus)* is the exclusive object of the Greenland fishery. The various species of this whale are found in every part of the ocean, but

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most abundantly in the Greenland seas, and on the Banks of Brazil. The valuable products of this animal are common, or right whale oil, and whalebone. Of 322 individuals of this species, Captain Scoresby says, the longest he ever measured was 58 feet in length. The largest quantity of oil, ever obtained from the right whale, is about 200 barrels.* Before the Revolutionary war, a sloop from New Bedford, commanded by Captain John Howland, captured one in the Straits of Belleisle which yielded 212 barrels of oil. Two fish loaded the sloop with 400 barrels of oil, and 400 pounds of bone. These however were of extraordinary size. When taken in the northern seas, the skin of this whale is clean and smooth, but when taken in southern latitudes, he is shaggy and covered with barnacles and small shell fish. The food of this kind of whales is composed chiefly of small shrimps and animalculae. We should hardly expect, in regions so desolate and scathed as those beyond the Arctic circle, subsistence for the animal creation, or an organization capable of sustaining the vital energies. But instead of ceasing, life seems here to spring forth in more boundless profusion ; and the arctic zone, in the immensity and variety of animal life, rivals the production of the tropical suns. The whole northern ocean teems with minute and almost invisible particles of life. Where discernible by the microscope, they prove to be of the class vermes, of the genus *medusa.* They are of a soft, elastic substance, and are supposed to be the cause of an olive green color, which extends frequently over an hundred miles of ocean. The number outruns the expression of language ; and, if we may rely on the estimate of Scoresby, 80,000 men, employed in counting from the creation, could only number two square miles of these animalculae. These are food for the next higher order, and each degree becomes food for that next elevated in the scale. Among these great shoals, the right whale is generally found, feeding only upon the smaller degrees. The upper part of his mouth is composed of compact slabs of whalebone, which terminate in a kind of fibre or fringe. He swims when feeding, with his mouth

* Douglas, in his history of America, says that the whalers of Davis's Straits kill whales yielding 500 or 600 barrels of oil, and bone of 18 feet in length ; but this is an error. The largest whales yield but about 200 barrels of oil and 14 feet bone.

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wide open, occasionally shutting over the lower lip to squeeze out the water. The small fish remain entangled in the network, and are devoured.

The sperm whale, (blunt headed *cachalot*) is of a different genus from the right whale. He is principally distinguished by a broad blunt head, by a heavy bunch beyond the middle of his back, and by his single blow-hole on the very extremity of the head, while the right whale has two blow-holes, which are placed five or six feet from the nose. The under jaw of this genus is supplied with teeth, while the upper is destitute. His food also is of a different nature, for he feeds upon a gelatinous kind of animated substance, belonging to the class *Mollusca*. This is called the squid or cuttle fish. It sometimes is seen of an immense magnitude, and is provided with long arms, on the extremities of which is a kind of suckers. It is to the fact that the whale feeds on this animal and fish-spawn, that Byron alludes in his apostrophe to the Ocean,

'Even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made.'

The spermaceti whales are found in the greatest numbers near the Western Islands, (the Azores,) on the coast of Africa, and in various parts of the Pacific Ocean. While the sperm whale yields far less oil in quantity, it is about three times as valuable as common oil. The spermaceti, called in its crude state head-matter, is taken from a cavity in the head of the whale, where it is found almost entirely by itself. That rich perfumery, called ambergris, is taken from the intestines of this whale, and is said to be found only in subjects of disease. The rarest of this genus yields about one hundred and fifteen barrels. While the right whale roams alone, the sperm whale is gregarious. We cannot forbear to relate a very unusual and grand appearance of a herd of these whales, as described by an eye-witness.

'A ship was becalmed in the Pacific. The man at the mast head announced, "there she blows!" The boats were lowered, and manned as usual. But the whales, instead of rolling heavily along, seemed to approach with great rapidity. They appeared to be in an agitation, that could be caused only by agony of fright. They would dart rapidly. Again they would cut in spiral paths or leap abruptly from their element. Some dashed over the surface, and many of the dark masses, moving like shadows of



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black clouds, exhibited the same agitation below. All this time, every spiracle gave violent and repeated explosions. We need not say, that the sailors looked on with the silence of death. The herd soon passed beyond the reach of sight, leaving the most experienced to wonder for the unseen and unknown cause of the consternation.'

The ships, employed in the whale fishery, are generally from three hundred to three hundred and fifty tons burthen. Some are employed from this country, of a much larger size. The Greenland ships are built with all the strength and durability with which wood and iron can be combined, to enable them to withstand the rude concussions of the ice. The ships, according to the necessities of their particular voyage, are manned with from twenty to thirty or forty men. The boats are long and narrow, and sharp at each extremity, and are built of the lightest materials for buoyancy and speed. They float upon the surface with the grace of the sea-bird upon its peculiar element, and are changed and turned by the steersman and five strong rowers, with amazing dexterity. When cruising, the Greenlanders have the captain or other officer stationed in a little box, called the crow's nest, on the main top. Protected, as far as he can be protected, when the thermometer indicates a temperature ranging from 10° to 30° below zero, with his telescope he descries the whale, and guides the ship through the perilous icy channels.

The method of taking the whale, as practised by all nations and for every species, is nearly as follows. The whale is compelled to come frequently to the surface, for the purpose of breathing. The nearest boat approaches from behind, from which the harpoon is launched into the huge carcass. This it is almost impossible to disengage, it being provided with two strong barbs. If not instantly killed, the whale sinks, and sinks often to a great depth. Exhausted by the immense superincumbent pressure of the water, he sometimes comes up dead. Frequently he sinks only a short distance; but as soon as he rises, the whalemen endeavor to plunge into him the lance, an instrument of the finest steel, sharpened with the keenness of the surgeon's lancet. Attached to the harpoon is a line, which, as the animal is disposed to sink or dash through the waves, is suffered to run loose around a small post in the stern of the boat, and it often flies with such rapidity that the harpooner is enveloped in smoke, and it becomes necessary to pour on wa-

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ter, to prevent the friction from generating flame. They often bind line after line together. If the line become entangled while the whale is sinking, the boat sometimes rears one end aloft, and makes a majestic dive into the deep. In the contest the boat is sometimes dashed to shivers, and the men experience no pleasant immersion, if they are fortunate enough to escape without broken limbs. The whale, stung with the fatal wound, sometimes dashes along the surface, with a death-like energy, and the little boat, almost under water, flies with the velocity of the wind. If he escape, he escapes with a prize on which he has no cause of congratulation, for he carries deeply buried in his body one or more of the sharp instruments, and drags off several hundred fathoms of rope. Our whalemen have found irons in the carcass of a whale, known to have been planted there several years before on another ocean. As the warp flies, it sometimes throws its coils around the body of a man, and dragging him over in a moment, it carries him into the ocean depths, from which he never more emerges. Sometimes it only dislocates or breaks the legs and arms of the unfortunate men, who become entangled in the folds. A captain of a New London ship, was caught by two coils of the warp, one around his body, and another around his leg. He had the presence of mind immediately to seize his knife, and after a while succeeded in cutting himself loose. He was carried however to a great depth, and when he returned to the surface, was almost exhausted. The whale, when roused to desperation, makes an onset with his mouth only. Then he crushes a boat to atoms, and the men escape by jumping into the sea. A sperm whale destroyed two boats of a Nantucket ship, and then attacked the ship, but being obliged to turn over nearly on his back to use the under jaw, with which he does execution, he made little impression upon the vessel.

We have thus far followed the Europeans in the northern fishery. It remains to follow our own people to other and broader seas, in the safer, more extensive, and more lucrative prosecution of the business. Second only in maritime importance among nations, our country has already outstripped all others in the whale fishery. Our efforts first commenced in open boats on the shores of Cape Cod and Nantucket, at an early period of our history. As soon as a whale appeared to the keen eyes of our fishermen, a boat was pushed off in pursuit. This precarious business is not even now forgotten, and

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the huge carcass of the leviathan is not an unfrequent reward of the watchful inhabitants of the Cape Cod towns. The boat was soon enlarged to the sloop, whose cruise stretched gradually as far as the straits of Belleisle and Labrador, and along our southern coasts to the West India Seas. In time, the sloop was metamorphosed into a brig or a ship, and the shores of Africa were next frequented. The adventurers crossed the equator to attack the monster on the rugged coasts of Brazil and Patagonia. Soon, the arduous doubling of Cape Horn opened to our researches the vast expanse of the Pacific. Our ships may now be seen lingering for supplies in all the western ports of South America, and one hundred of them annually recruit at the Sandwich Islands. They have scoured every part of the Pacific; and the coasts of Japan are now the scene of their most successful labors. Thence they often return home, around the Cape of Good Hope, thus circumnavigating the globe in a three years' voyage.

It appears from the early history of the Colonies, that our bays were once plenteously stocked with whales. A poem, published in England, as early as 1623, by one William Morrell, among other fish, flesh, and creeping things, thus mentions the whale,

> 'The mighty whale doth in these harbours lye,
> Whose oyle the careful merchant deare will buy.'

For near a century, the business was carried on from the Cape Cod towns, particularly Provincetown, Truro, and Wellfleet, in open boats. They subsequently pursued the business in larger craft, and in some instances their vessels were despatched to Labrador, for the double purpose of cod and whale fishing. Nantucket was settled in 1759. The inhabitants were instructed in the whale fishery by the Cape Cod people. The whales were brought in by boats, and the oil was extracted on the shore. In 1730, they employed as many as twenty-five sloops, and about this period they began to erect works on deck, and put up the oil on shipboard. The fleet constantly increased. In 1756, eighty sloops sailed from the Island, and on the breaking out of the Revolutionary war, one hundred and forty sloops, schooners, and brigs, were engaged upon the coasts of Guinea, Brazil, and the West Indies, annually. Thirty thousand barrels of oil were the rich result

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of their vigorous exertions. About the year 1765, the inhabitants of Dartmouth, now New Bedford, began the business on the shore of Acushnet river, gradually launched their vessels in the pursuit, and at the commencement of the war employed forty or fifty sail. From this place was fitted out the first whaling expedition to the Falkland Islands in 1774, consisting of two vessels. Thus the New England whale fishery, previously to the Revolution, already employed nearly two hundred vessels. The extent of this business, and the indefatigable manner of its prosecution, is best illustrated by the felicitous language of Burke.

'Look at the manner in which the people of New England have of late carried on the Whale Fishery. Whilst we follow them among the tumbling mountains of ice, and behold them penetrating into the deepest frozen recesses of Hudson's Bay, and Davis's Straits, whilst we are looking for them beneath the arctic circle, we hear that they have pierced into the opposite region of polar cold, that they are at the antipodes, and engaged under the frozen serpent of the south. Falkland Islands, which seemed too remote and romantic an object for the grasp of national ambition, is but a stage and resting place in the progress of their victorious industry. Nor is the equinoctial heat more discouraging to them, than the accumulated winter of both the poles. We know, that while some of them draw the line, and strike the harpoon on the coast of Africa, others run the longitude, and pursue their gigantic game along the coast of Brazil. No sea but what is vexed by their fisheries. No climate that is not witness to their toils. Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this perilous mode of hardy industry to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people,—a people who are still, as it were, but in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood.'

After the war, the rotten and decayed hulks were repaired, and new ships built and launched from both the ports of Nantucket and New Bedford. While the former place again pursued almost exclusively her old employment, the vessels from the latter were some of them allured from it by better prospects. The first American vessel that delighted the eyes of 'his Majesty's loving subjects,' in a British port, and there exultingly unfurled the fresh and broad folds of the star-span-

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gled banner, sailed from Nantucket.* It might be mentioned, as a singular coincidence, that one of the ships, from which the tea was thrown overboard in Boston harbor, before the Revolution, was owned at the same port. While our commerce was freighting for those nations, who were embroiled in the contests growing out of the French Revolution, the extension of the business was by no means rapid. It met with the severest reverses it had ever experienced, during the late war. Most of our whale ships in the Pacific were captured. Recaptured by Porter and Downes, many of them returned, but the greater part were burned, sunk, or turned into transports for the British navy. The island of Nantucket alone lost *twenty-seven* ships.

Since the termination of that war, the business has advanced with unprecedented rapidity. Port after port has launched her ships into the Pacific; and we learn from the newspapers, that whaling companies have been formed at Wiscasset in Maine, and at Wilmington in Delaware. The following estimate of the number of ships employed from the several whaling ports of the United States, is derived from authentic sources.

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* The first vessel that displayed the American flag in a British port, was the brig Bedford of Nantucket, then commanded by Captain William Moers. During the Revolutionary war, the inhabitants of Nantucket maintained a neutral position, and a specified number of their whalers were authorized by the British Government to continue their expeditions. Mr. Rotch of Nantucket afterwards obtained permission of Admiral Digby, then commander on the New York station, to transport his oil to England. The Bedford, which was one of his vessels, sailed under this permission, and arrived in the Downs soon after the conclusion of the preliminary articles of peace. She immediately hoisted the American flag, and carried it displayed, as she proceeded up the Thames. This new spectacle excited a great sensation, and the brig was visited by crowds of persons, among whom was a sister of the celebrated John Wilkes.

The honor of first displaying the star-spangled banner, in a British port, has been sometimes erroneously attributed to another ship, called the Maria, also from Nantucket, and belonging to the same Mr. Rotch. The mistake probably arose from her having been subsequently commanded by the same Captain Moers, who commanded the Bedford on the voyage in question. The Maria was a little ship of 200 tons, built at Scituate, for a privateer. After undergoing repeated repairs, she is still, we understand, in very good condition, makes unusually successful voyages, and, though more than half a century old, bids fair to outlast another generation.

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|---|---|---|
| From | New Bedford,* | 184 |
| | Nantucket, | 73 |
| | Edgartown, Falmouth, and Fall River, | 12 |
| | New London,† | 37 |
| | Sag Harbor, | 24 |
| | Bristol, Warren and Newport, (R. I.), | 31 |
| | New York, Hudson, Poughkeepsie and Newburgh, | 21 |
| | Ports north of Cape Cod, viz. Plymouth, Salem, Newburyport, and Portsmouth, | 10 |
| | | 392 |

Several ships are building, designed for the employment. It appears, therefore, that an aggregate of *four hundred ships*, (including a few barques and brigs under that name) will be engaged during the present year in the whaling business from this country. To show how actively and continuously the pursuit is kept up, we may mention that, of the one hundred and eighty-four vessels belonging to the district of New Bedford, one hundred and seventy-one, navigated by 4242 men, were actually at sea on the 30th September last, and about the same proportion from other ports.

The business naturally divides itself into the sperm and common whale fisheries. In the former, are employed about two hundred and fifty ships, whose average voyages are thirty months in length. Each of these ships may be valued, with the outfits, at $35,000. In the right whale business are employed one hundred and fifty ships. Each of those ships, with the outfits, costs $18,000, and the average length of the voyage is ten months. The cost is estimated low; for though some of the ships or brigs cost but little more than half of the sums at which we have valued them, many of them far exceed and almost double the estimated value. Thus is employed a capital of nearly $12,000,000. The imports of the year 1831 were about 110,000 barrels of sperm oil, 118,000 barrels of whale oil, and 1,000,000 pounds of whalebone. The imports of the year 1832 were about 80,000 barrels of sperm oil, 175,000 barrels of whale oil, and 1,350,000 pounds of bone. From

* In the district of New Bedford, are included Fairhaven and several small ports in the vicinity. About thirty of these ships belong to those places, principally to Fairhaven.

† Stonington is included in the New London district.

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the data within our reach, we estimate the annual income of the fishery for the last three years at four and a half millions of dollars. If the voyages prove as successful, and *if prices remain as high*, the annual income for the four coming years, including the present, will be more than six millions of dollars.

The sperm whalers generally load on the coast of Japan, though great quantities of sperm oil are taken in other parts of the Pacific, on the coasts of Africa and near the Azores. The chief and almost exclusive field of the right whale fishery is on the coasts of Brazil and Patagonia. The Greenland fishermen are obliged to bring home the blubber from which the oil is extracted, while our whalemen have small works for extracting it, erected on deck. The scraps and pieces of carcass are used for fuel. The oil, when first extracted, is neither nauseous nor rancid, and as a proof of its sweetness, the cakes fried in the boilers are considered a great delicacy by the sailors.

The products of the sperm fishery are the sperm or lamp oil, and spermaceti candles. The products of the right whale fishery are common whale oil and whalebone. The sperm oil is almost entirely consumed in our own country in the lamp and the factory. After the head-matter of this oil is compressed, the residuum is purified and refined, and afterwards manufactured into those candles, which contribute so much to the brilliancy of our halls and parlors. By a chemical process they can be tinged with every color, and wax colored candles from Nantucket are often sold for unadulterated wax. There are between fifty and sixty candle manufactories, and the quantity annually made is about 3,000,000 pounds. The common whale oil is mostly exported to the north of Europe. The whalebone also is mostly exported to Europe. Some of it, however, we see devoted to a thousand little purposes at home. We hold it over our heads in the umbrella,—we feel it about our necks in the rigid stock, and the fairer portion of our race can give an account of the consumption of vast quantities more. The 'stiff stays and expanded hoops' of our great grandmothers once rendered this article far more valuable than it is at present, and should our whalers be threatened with ruin, we would implore our fair countrywomen to emulate their ancestral dames, and thus give an encouragement more grateful and effectual, than any that government can afford.

The average tonnage of our 400 whale ships, is 330 tons, and each employs about twenty-five men, making an aggre-

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gate of 132,000 tons of shipping, and 10,000 men. These are employed *directly* and exclusively in the pursuit. A vast amount of capital is indirectly dependent on it. On the books of the custom-house at New Bedford, on the 30th September last, were recorded 199 ships, 82 brigs, 50 schooners, 103 sloops and 1 steamboat,—in all, 385 vessels, whose aggregate tonnage was 76,828 tons, giving employment to 5,500 seamen. At the same time were recorded on the custom-house books at Nantucket 73 ships, 21 schooners, 46 sloops, and one steamboat, —in all 141 vessels, with an aggregate tonnage of 29,400 tons, giving employment to more than 2000 seamen. Of those vessels not engaged in whaling, the larger ones are principally employed in transporting oil to Europe, and return with cargoes of hemp, duck, iron, &c. The others are employed in the coasting trade. These two districts carry on but five-eighths of the whaling business. Calculating on the same ratio, we should find that 840 vessels of various descriptions, measuring 170,000 tons, and navigated by 12,000 seamen, were dependent on the business; or about *one tenth* of the whole navigation of our country. Following the trade backward, we see the great numbers of ship-builders, traders and mechanics, who have been employed,—pursuing it forward, we see an equal number of laborers, manufacturers, coasters and factors, deriving from it their subsistence. About thirty-one per cent. of the whole income of the business is distributed among the crews on their arrival. At Mattapoisett, (Rochester,) near New Bedford, 120 vessels, of various kinds, have been built since the conclusion of the late war, and most of these have found their way into the trade. Taking into consideration the manufactories, wharves, stores, &c. and other incidental investments, we shall find that $70,000,000 of property are involved in it, and that more than 70,000 people derive from it their chief subsistence. Our fields contribute to its supplies. Our pigs and cattle, and ship-timber from our forests, find a ready market in the whaling ports:— 45,000 barrels of flour from Southern mills,—36,000 barrels of beef and pork,—900,000 lbs. of copper and copper nails,— 1,500,000 staves,—2,500 tons of iron hoops, large quantities of duck, cordage, ship stores, and whale craft, are the necessary annual outfits of the whale fleet.

It would seem impossible to stretch the business to any greater extent from this country. In 1824, too great a supply of sperm oil produced a ruinous depression of prices, but the



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demand was still thought to warrant a steady and gradual increase of the sperm whale fishery. The calculation is now, however, considered by the shrewdest merchants to have been too sanguine, and they already begin to anticipate a reverse. The markets for common whale oil are now precarious. They fluctuate with the fortunes of the Greenland fishery, and prices are more or less dependent on the crops and manufacture of vegetable oils in Europe. While the increase or decrease, therefore, of the sperm whale fishery ought to depend on somewhat certain calculations, the right whale fishery must fluctuate with circumstances.

It is curious, to follow the operations of the tariff on this important business. Let the Europeans cease giving bounties,* and our economy and skill would drive their whalers from the ocean. At the same time, take off the duty on olive oil, and the French will glut our markets with that article. But while the greater demand, consequent upon the decrease of whale ships, would raise the price of this article, were the duties on hemp, duck, iron, and other articles that enter into the expense of ship-building, taken off, our ships would sail cheaper, and we could again enter into competition. Give us universal, free trade, and they will float buoyantly, as they also do now that the protecting system is universal. If any pursuit demand the favor of government, it is this. Fitted out with the products of our fields, or their immediate earnings, the fleet goes forth, and draws its wealth from the bosom of the ocean. It does not exchange, but creates value, and contributes nothing to pamper the pride, or fill the coffers of a rival people. Without this business, the larger part of the southern shores of Massachusetts would exhibit a sad sterility. New Bedford is built literally upon the rocks, and the people of Nantucket have founded their house upon the sand; but though peculiarly exposed to the rains and the flood, and the beating and blowing of the winds, it yet stands strong. Here,

* The British government gave a bounty of 20*s.* per. tun of oil in 1733, of 40*s.* in 1740, and of 50*s.* in 1749. They have continued to give bounties, diminished, however, after about the year 1797, almost to the present moment. The kings of Denmark, Prussia, and France, have at various times given bounties and privileges to whalers. The Dutch have endeavored to revive the fishery, by remunerating their ships that make unfortunate voyages, with bounties proportionate to their losses. The French bounty at this time is about 40 francs per ton on the tonnage of the vessel.

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without a bounty, with only a single incidental protection (more than balanced by counteracting duties) the whole population have devoted themselves to the business, and against all European competition, propped and sustained as it is, they now supply half the markets of northern Europe, and our own continent besides; a confirmation strong, that men, sinews and muscle are the secrets of commercial success; that they are the secrets of comfort and opulence. Indeed, it may be doubted, whether any branch of commercial business, in any country, was ever prosecuted more honorably, more successfully, and more ardently, than the whale fishery from New England for the last fifteen years.

Let us look at it as a nursery of seamen. Chiefly with an eye to this object, the English government encouraged this fishery. It was necessary for each ship to carry a certain number of 'green men and apprentices,' before it could be entitled to the bounty. They encouraged it for the sake of promoting a love of adventure, to inure their seamen to toil and peril, to compel them to become skilful, watchful, and hardy. Accordingly we find, that many of those heroes, who have carried the British trident triumphantly over the globe, and eclipsed the naval glories of Carthage, Venice and Holland, were conversant with similar scenes and toils. The veteran who, with one arm and one eye, carried consternation into the combined fleets of Europe at Trafalgar, first signalized his decision and prowess under the same arctic sky to which the British whaler was exposed. If the longest voyages, that are made over the ocean,—if the navigation of every sea on the globe, serene or boisterous,—if the strictest discipline and subordination of large crews, constitute a nursery for seamen,—we have one which it should be our pride and duty to protect.

We hope we shall be pardoned for going into these lengthened details. The purpose of this article was to give a statistical account of the business. It is a subject, with which most of the community are entirely unacquainted. The newspapers give most accurate descriptions of every little watering place, which counts a dozen visiters for the season; and every wart on the little finger of Paganini the fidler, is minutely described, while a trade that employs one tenth of the navigation of the Union, and has thus become an important part of the national industry, is the subject only of partial and erroneous statements. We have no American book or pamphlet on the subject,

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unless the little tracts, the title of which we have placed at the head of this article, may be called so. In these tracts, the whole subject of the American whale fishery is this summarily despatched.

'The whale fishery is a very important branch of the business of this country. The chief towns from which it is carried on are Nantucket and New Bedford. There are in the former, fifty (?) manufactories of oil and candles. There are now sixty-two ships belonging to the port, and six ships are building for the whaling business. The value of this fleet, as fitted for sea, amounts to about 2,000,000 dollars.'

If we understand the meaning of the word, any book that pretends to the title of Scientific Tract, should contain full, true and accurate information. The compiler should have known, though his selections from Captain Scoresby are judicious, that the American whale fishery is of immeasurably more importance to us than any other; and as such, demanded his notice.

With the name of fishermen, we are apt to associate ideas of rudeness and ignorance: but a large portion of the crew of a whaleman are the hardy, intelligent sons of our soil. It requires some nerve and some stirrings of enterprise to leave a home and friends for a three years' voyage. Being paid by a certain proportion of the cargo, they habitually become alert and vigilant in the prosecution of the voyage. Prompted by the common craving for wealth, and the hope of promotion, they are orderly and ambitious. Some of them improve the leisure of a long voyage by reading. Many of the officers are scientific navigators. That they are men of responsibility and character, is proved by the fact, that a trust of $100,000, in instances of remarkable success, may be subject to their discretion. The original stock from which the seamen were selected, has of late furnished but part of the crew. The rest are a motley collection. There are often found on the same deck the lingering remnants of the aborigines of this State, in specimens of the Gayhead and Marshpee tribes,—the runaway slave,—a renegade tar from the British navy,—the Irish,—the Dutch,—the mongrel Portuguese from the Azores, and the natives of the Sandwich Islands, from which the captains make up the complements of crews diminished by accident or disease, or scanty by design. There too may be seen a race of men, of which 'long Tom Coffin' is no mean representative; and sometimes

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deeply ensconced in the loose garb of a sailor, the effeminate face of some precocious youth, who, in a college or a compting room, has worn out all forbearance of friends and tutors; lastly, the shrewd native of the nutmeg State, who has so far mistaken his peculiar bent of mind, that he now ploughs the broad ocean, instead of vending his clocks and clothes-pins from Dan to Beersheba on shore. There in short may be seen the natives of four continents, cheek by jowl, at the same mess, mingling in the same merry jests, and laughing reciprocally at each others' blunders.

The subordination of these crews is evinced by the fact, that although composed of such various materials, and absent on long cruises, broils and mutinies rarely occur. When they have occurred, they have generally resulted in no evil. To one mutiny, however, we can hardly find a parallel in the annals of piracy and murder. It took place on board the ship Globe of Nantucket, in 1823. A reckless cold-blooded villain, of the name of Comstock, planned it,—murdered with his own hand, with the most brutal atrocity, all the officers,—took command of the ship, and sailed for the Mulgrave Islands. While the mutineers were on shore, a counterplot was devised, and Comstock himself paid the penalty due to his malignity, in being shot by his confederates. Several of the crew escaped with the ship and arrived safely at Valparaiso, where she was delivered to the American consul. Of those remaining on the island, all were murdered by the natives, except two, William Lay, and Cyrus M. Hussey, who were subsequently taken off by the United States' schooner Dolphin, and restored to their homes. When they arrived in this country, they published a narrative of the mutiny, and of their captivity among the islanders.

As the whale ship escapes with perhaps fewer disasters, so the men are generally more healthy than in any other seafaring employments. They experience nothing so fearful, as many merchant ships do, from the direful diseases of the tropical regions. Those ships, however, which frequent stormy seas, and remain long abroad without fresh provisions, often find the scurvy making its fearful ravages. It is also true, that the unfortunate man, who is not active enough to elude the line, is sometimes carried down by it. Sometimes bones are broken, and lives lost, in the rough contests with the inhabitants of the deep. Sometimes a boat's crew is separated and never heard

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of, though they generally reach the land, or are rescued by some other vessel. Notwithstanding these causes of disaster, ship after ship returns without losing a man by death.

Among the accidents that have occurred in the prosecution of this business, the loss of the ship Essex, Captain George Pollard, Jr. of Nantucket, is one of the most remarkable. It was thus described in an authentic narrative of the event, published by the mate of the ship, Mr. Owen Chase.

'I observed a very large spermaceti whale, as well as I could judge about eighty-five (?) feet in length. He broke water about twenty rods off our weather bow, and was lying quietly with his head in a direction for the ship. He spouted two or three times, and then disappeared. In less than three seconds he came up again, about the length of the ship off, and made directly for us, at the rate of about three knots. The ship was then going with about the same velocity. His appearance and attitude gave us at first no alarm, but while I stood watching his movements and observing him, but a ship's length off, coming down for us with great celerity, I involuntarily ordered the boy at the helm to put it hard up, intending to sheer off and avoid him. The words were scarcely out of my mouth before he came down upon us at full speed, and struck the ship with his head just forward of the fore chains. He gave us such an appalling and tremendous jar as nearly threw us all on our faces. The ship brought up as suddenly and violently as if she had struck a rock, and trembled for a few moments like a leaf. We looked at each other in perfect amazement, deprived almost of the power of speech. Many minutes elapsed before we were able to realize the dreadful accident, during which time he passed under the ship, grazing her keel as he went along, came up alongside her to leeward, and lay on the top of the water, apparently stunned with the violence of the blow, for the space of a minute. He then suddenly started off in a direction to leeward. After a few moments' reflection, and recovering in some measure from the sudden consternation that had seized us, I, of course, concluded that he had stove a hole in the ship, and that it would be necessary to set the pumps going. Accordingly they were rigged, but had not been in operation more than one minute, before I perceived the head of the ship to be gradually settling down in the water. I then ordered the signal to be set for the other boats, (at that time in pursuit of whales,) which I had scarcely despatched, before I again discovered the whale apparently in convulsions on the top of the water about one hundred rods to leeward. He was enveloped in the foam, that his continual and violent

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threshing about in the water had created around him, and I could distinctly see him smite his jaws together as if distracted with rage and fury. He remained a short time in this situation, and then started off with great velocity across the bows of the ship to windward. By this time the ship had settled down a considerable distance in the water, and I gave her up as lost. I however, ordered the pumps to be kept constantly going, and endeavored to collect my thoughts for the occasion. I turned to the boats, two of which we then had with the ship, with an intention of clearing them away and getting all things ready to embark in them, if there should be no other resource left. While my attention was thus engaged for a moment, I was roused by the cry of the man at the hatchway, "here he is,—he is making for us again." I turned around, and saw him about one hundred rods directly ahead of us, coming down with apparently twice his ordinary speed, and to me it appeared with tenfold fury and vengeance in his aspect. The surf flew in all directions, and his course towards us was marked by a white foam of a rod in width, which he made with a continual violent threshing of his tail. His head was about half out of water, and in that way he came upon, and again struck the ship. I was in hopes when I descried him making for us, that by putting the ship away immediately, I should be able to cross the line of his approach, before he could get up to us, and thus avoid, what I knew, if he should strike us again, would be our inevitable destruction. I called out to the helmsman "hard up," but she had not fallen off more than a point before we took the second shock. I should judge the speed of the ship at this time, to have been about three knots, and that of the whale about six. He struck her to windward, directly under the cat-head, and completely stove in her bows. He passed under the ship again, went off to leeward, and we saw no more of him.'

This disastrous encounter occurred near the equator, at one thousand miles' distance from land. Provisioned and equipped with whatever they could save from the wreck, twenty men embarked in three slender whale boats, one of which was already crazy and leaky. One boat was never heard of afterwards. The crews of the others suffered every misery that can be conceived, from famine and exposure. In the captain's boat, they drew lots for the privilege of being shot to satisfy the rabid hunger of the rest. After nearly three months, the captain's boat, with two survivors, and the mate's boat with three, were taken up at sea, two thousand miles from the scene of the disaster, by different ships.

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There have been other instances of shipwreck, caused by the shock of these leviathans. In 1807, the ship Union of Nantucket, Captain Gardner, was totally lost between Nantucket and the Azores, by a similar concussion. But no other instance is known, in which the mischief is supposed to have been malignantly designed by the assailant, and the most experienced whalers believe that even in this case the attack was not intentional. Mr. Chase, however, could not be persuaded to think so. He says that all he saw 'produced on his mind the impression of decided and calculating mischief' on the part of this maddened leviathan.

The whaler sometimes roams for months, without finding his prey; but he is buoyed up by the expectation of finally reaping the profits of a great voyage. To some minds, the pursuit of such gigantic game has a tinge of the romantic. There must be a thrilling excitement in the adventurous chase. 'The blood more stirs to rouse a lion, than to start a hare.' Many become passionately attached to the business, notwithstanding all its privations, and reluctantly leave it at last. They have moments of most pleasing anxiety, and meet with some incidents of the most enlivening cast. On the south-east coast of Africa is Delego Bay, a calm smooth place, frequented by vessels from various parts of the world. In this bay, a few years since, a whale was observed about equally distant from an American and an English ship. From both, the boats were lowered, manned and pushed off in an instant. They sped with the velocity of the wind. The scene reminds one of the competitors for the prize in Æneas's boat-race on the shores of Sicily.

'Olli certamine summo
Procumbunt: vastis tremit ictibus aenea puppis,
Subtrahiturque solum.'

'Now, one and all they tug amain: They row
At the full stretch, and shake the brazen prow,—
The sea beneath them sinks.'

The English, at first ahead, perceiving their rivals gaining upon them, bore wide off to keep them out of reach of the whale. When the two boats were nearly abreast, one of the American sailors leaped from his seat, and with extraordinary agility hurled the ponderous harpoon over the English boat,—it struck the

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monster in the vital part,—the English boat shrunk back under the warp,—the waves were crimsoned with blood,—and the American took possession, while the whole bay echoed and reëchoed with repeated shouts of applause.

Our whalemen have brought nautical science to great perfection. The voyage round the southern extremity of Cape Horn has always been represented as a most boisterous one. It was once thought so hazardous, that some national vessels have preferred to be buffeted about in the straits of Magellan, to attempting it. But the great whale fleets are never intimidated, and rarely does an accident occur to damp their ardor. A boat or a spar are the most serious losses they suffer, and their unfailing success, in effecting a passage, has been a subject of wonder to the naval officers of Britain. In the south seas, they have brought to light islands before unknown, and found men who had never before seen a ship, or civilized man,—men who exhibited the same savage ferocity, to which so many navigators have fallen victims in the Pacific. On the latest maps and charts we find more than thirty of these islands, and reefs bearing the names of Nantucket captains and merchants. To one is applied the harmonious title of New Nantucket.

Our sealers have been equally adventurous in their explorations. A few years since, two Russian discovery ships came in sight of a group of cold inhospitable islands in the Antarctic ocean. The commander imagined himself a discoverer, and doubtless was prepared, with drawn sword, and with the flag of his sovereign flying over his head, to take possession in the name of the Czar. At this time he was becalmed in a dense fog. Judge of his surprise, when the fog cleared away, to see a little sealing sloop from Connecticut, as quietly riding between his ships, as if lying in the waters of Long Island sound. He learned from the captain, that the islands were already well known, and that he had just returned from exploring the shores of a new land at the south; upon which the Russian gave vent to an expression too harsh to be repeated, but sufficiently significant of his opinion of American enterprise. After the captain of the sloop, he named the discovery 'Palmer's land,' in which the Americans acquiesced, and by this name it appears to be designated on all the recently published Russian and English charts.

A singular fact, connected with the whale and seal fisheries,



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illustrates the truth that accident, or private and individual enterprise, can often effect more than the most costly expeditions. Many are the voyages that have been undertaken for the purpose of reaching the poles of the earth. It is known, that after the disruptions in summer, the vast masses of ice generally drift away from the polar regions. Attempts have been made to thread a passage through the drift ice, and thus reach the pole; and again the visionary scheme has been devised, of dashing over it with a sledge and reindeer, and thus taking the poles, as it were, by storm. They have all failed; but the English whalers at the north and our sealers at the south, have several times found themselves beyond the ice, where the vast and smooth expanse opened to them, inviting them to explore those unknown and 'awful mysteries, about which the imaginations of men have for ages been busied.' Captain Scoresby tells us what were his emotions when within 470 miles of the pole. He felt that it was in his power to penetrate those dreary solitudes, unexplored by man, since the fiat of the Almighty brought the universe into existence. He was restrained from the attempt, by the reflection, that his voyage was private, for private ends. That this region is frequently open, is confirmed by the fact, that large numbers of whales come over that part of the globe. Roused to enthusiasm by such reports, a gentleman by the name of Reynolds promised 'to place his little vessel where she should turn round on the very axis of the earth every twenty-four hours.' For this purpose he thought he had obtained an appropriation from the last administration, but it was *vetoed* by the present. A private company fitted out the brigs Seraph and Annawan, to aid him in his researches, but the attempt proved as futile as all similar ones. The vessels returned with great loss, and were sold, we believe, under the hammer of the auctioneer.

We have not mentioned one important branch of the whale fishery,—the more important, as it threatens to divert the British southern fishery to another part of the earth. The settlers at New South Wales have carried it on for several years with great spirit and success. At the port of Sydney alone, in 1830, sixteen vessels were actually employed, and nine new ones were building. Their proximity to the most eligible fishing stations enables them to perform three voyages, while the English and Americans perform two. While they reach the grounds in fifty days, the latter are frequently seven months in

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performing the passage. The freight of the oil from New Holland to England is estimated at only a tenth of the amount they can realize by being employed in the fishery during the time they would consume in going to and returning from England themselves. The New Hollanders anticipate a monopoly of the trade, and already British ships have gone to engage with them in the fishery, instructed to act upon the principle of shipping their oil homeward and refitting from the colony.

In 1784, the King of France endeavored to give an impulse to the whaling business in his dominions, by fitting out six ships at his own expense. Allured by peculiar immunities, several families from Nantucket settled at Dunkirk. The business increased so rapidly, that forty ships were employed in 1793. With every thing else, this business was suspended and overwhelmed by the Revolution. Most of the Americans returned, and one of the gentlemen settled in New Bedford, where he became opulent by the prosecution of the business from his own country. Under similar inducements, an American gentleman is now deeply engaged in the French whale fishery. The French whale fleet at the present moment may be estimated at forty sail, three fourths of which sail from the port of Havre.

Taking into consideration the ships that sail from the German ports, with the English, French, and American fleets, we shall find that more than 700 ships are engaged in pursuing these mighty inhabitants of the deep. In one part of the world, they have been driven to the deepest recesses of Baffin's Bay, and in another to the very confines of the Pacific. Whether their mammoth bones shall indicate to the untaught natives of the shores they frequent, in some distant century, that such an animal *was*, or whether, lurking in the inaccessible and undisturbed waters north of Asia and America, the race shall be preserved, is almost a problem. Certain it is that subsistence can never fail, teeming as all waters do, with such profusion of life. That a squadron of 700 vessels scour every sea and bay, in the eager and unremitted pursuit, without exterminating or apparently diminishing the species, leaves us to wonder at the exhaustless resources of nature.

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ART. V.—*Last Moments of Eminent Men.*

*De Euthanasia Medica. Prolusio Academica. Auctore* C. F. H. MARX. 4to. Gottingae. 1826.

'LIFE,' says Sir William Temple, 'is like wine; he, who would drink it pure, must not drain it to the dregs.' Lord Byron often talked of death; and never with dread. 'I do not wish,' he would say, 'to live to become old.' The sentiment of the ancient poet, 'that to die young is a boon of heaven to its favorites,' was repeatedly quoted by him, with approbation. The certainty of death he would call the only relief against the burdens of life, which could not be borne, were they not of very limited duration.

But the general sentiment of mankind declares old age to be honored and happy. After an active and successful career, the repose of declining life is serene and cheerful. All men by common consent revere the aged; grey hairs are a crown of glory; the object of respect, but not of envy. The hour of evening is not necessarily overcast; and the aged man, exchanging the pursuits of ambition for the quiet of observation, the strife of public discussion for the diffuse but instructive language of experience, passes to the grave, amidst grateful recollections, and the tranquil enjoyment of satisfied desires.

The happy, it is agreed by all, are afraid to contemplate death; the unhappy, it is often said, look forward to it as a release from suffering. 'I think of death often,' said a distinguished but dissatisfied man; 'and I view it as a refuge. There is something calm and soothing to me in the thought of death; and the only time that I feel repugnance to it, is on a fine day, in solitude, in a beautiful country, when all nature seems rejoicing in light and life.'

This is the language of affectation. Man never despises death. Numerous as may be the causes for disgust with life, its end is never contemplated with indifference. Religion may elevate the soul to a sublime reliance on the benefits of a future existence; nothing else can do it. The love of honor may brave danger; the passion of melancholy may indulge in an aversion to continued being; philosophy may resign itself

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to death with composure; the sense of shame may conduct to fortitude; yet they, who would disregard death, must turn their thoughts from the consideration of its terrors. It is an instinct of nature to strive to preserve our being; and the instinct cannot be eradicated. The mind may turn away from the contemplation of horrors; it may fortify itself by refusing to observe the extent of impending evil; the instinct of life is still opposed to death; and he, who looks directly at it and professes indifference, is a hypocrite, or is self-deceived. He, that calls boldly upon death, is dismayed on finding him near. The child looks to its parent, as if to discern a glimpse of hope; the oldest are never so old, but they desire life for one day longer; even the infant, as it exhales its breath, springs from its pillow to meet its mother, as if there were help where there is love.

There is a story told of one of the favorite marshals of Napoleon, who, in a battle in the south of Germany, was struck by a cannon ball, and so severely wounded, that there was no hope of a respite. Summoning the surgeon he ordered his wounds to be dressed; and, when help was declared to be unavailing, the dying officer, pushed into a frenzy by the passion for life, burned with vindictive anger against the medical attendant, threatening the heaviest penalties, if his art should bring no relief. The dying man clamorously demanded that Napoleon should be sent for, as one who had power to save; whose words could stop the effusion of blood from his wounds, and awe nature itself into submission. Life expired amidst maledictions heaped upon the innocent surgeon, whose skill was unavailing. This account would have seemed incredible, if we had not had occasion to know a similar case, though in humbler life; a sick man, vowing that he would not die, cursing his physician, who announced the near termination of his life, and insisting that he would live, as if in derision of the laws of nature. To some minds this foolish frenzy appeared like blasphemy; it was but the uncontrolled display of a passion for life; the instinct of self-preservation, exerted in a rough and undisciplined mind.

Even in men of strong religious convictions, the end of life is not always met with serenity; and the moralist and philosopher sometimes express an apprehension, which cannot be pacified. Dr. Johnson was the instructer of his age; his works are full of the effusions of piety, the austere lessons of

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reflecting wisdom. It might have been supposed, that religion would have reconciled him to the decree of Providence; that philosophy would have taught him to acquiesce in a necessary issue; that science would have inspired him with confidence in the skill of his medical attendants. And yet it was not so. A sullen gloom overclouded his mind; he could not summon resolution to tranquillize his emotions; and, in the impotence of despair, taking advantage of the absence of his attendants, he gashed himself with ghastly and debilitating wounds, as if the blind lacerations of his weak arm could prolong the moments of an existence, which the skill of the best physicians of London declared to be numbered. So earnest was the passion for a continuance of life, that he, who had, during his whole career, been a monitor of moderation, who had acquired fame by enforcing the duties of morality, was now betrayed by a lingering desire of life into acts of imbecile and useless cowardice.

'Is there any thing on earth, I can do for you?' said Taylor to Dr. Wolcott, as he lay on his death bed. The passion for life dictated the answer. 'Give me back my youth.' They were the last words of the satirical buffoon.

If Johnson could hope for relief from self-inflicted wounds; if the poet could prefer to his friend the useless prayer for a restoration of his youth, we may readily believe what historians relate to us of the end of Louis XI. of France; a monarch, who was not destitute of eminent qualities as well as disgusting vices; possessing courage, a knowledge of men and of business, a powerful will, a disposition favorable to the administration of justice among his subjects; viewing impunity in injustice, as a royal prerogative. Remorse, fear, a consciousness of being detected, disgust with life and horror of death, these were the sentiments, which troubled the death-bed of the powerful king. The ignorance of physicians in those days was in part betrayed by the belief, that the blood of children could correct the defects of age and the weakness of decrepitude. The monarch, the first who bore the epithet of 'the most Christian,' was so abandoned to egotism, that he allowed the veins of children to be opened, and greedily drank their blood. He believed that it would renovate his youth, or at least check the decay of nature. The cruelty was useless. At last, feeling the approach of death to be certain, he sent for an anchorite from Calabria, since revered as St. Francis de Paule;

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and when the hermit arrived, the monarch of France begged him to spare his life. He threw himself at the feet of the man, who was believed to be so powerful from the sanctity of his character; he begged the intercession of his prayers; he wept; he supplicated; he hoped that the voice of a Calabrian monk would reverse the order of nature; and that the virtues of his intercessor could procure him a respite from death.

We find the love of life still more strongly acknowledged by an English poet; who, after declaring life to be the dream of a shadow, 'a weak built isthmus between two eternities, so frail, that it can sustain neither wind nor wave,' yet avows his preference of a few days', nay, of a few hours' longer residence upon earth, to all the fame which poetry can bestow.

> Fain would I see that prodigal,
> Who his to-morrow would bestow,
> For all old Homer's life, e'er since he died, till now!

We do not believe the poet sincere; for one passion may prevail over another, and in many a man's breast the love of fame is at times, if not always, stronger than the love of being. But if those, who pass their lives in a struggle for glory, may desire the attainment of their object at any price, the competitors for political power are apt to be doubly enamored of being. Lord Castlereagh could indeed commit suicide; but it was not from disgust of life; his mind dwelt on the precarious condition of his own elevation, on the unsuccessful policy in which he had involved his country. He did not love death; he did not contemplate it with indifference; he failed to observe its terrors, because his attention was absorbed by objects which pressed themselves upon his mind with unrelenting force.

The ship of the Marquis of Badajoz, viceroy of Peru, was set on fire by Captain Stayner. The marchioness, and her daughter, who was betrothed to the Duke of Medina-Celi, swooned in the flames, and could not be rescued. The marquis resigned himself also to die, rather than survive with the memory of such horrors. It was not, that he was indifferent to life; his mind dwelt upon intolerable griefs; he preferred death, because death was out of sight; because his whole thoughts were absorbed by sorrows that left no room for reflection upon the nature of the event, which alone seemed to promise him a remedy. The natural feelings remained;

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the love of grandeur; the pride of opulence and power; but their action was for a time impeded.

Madame de Sevigné in her charming letters, gives the true sensations of the ambitious man, when suddenly called to leave the scenes of his efforts and his triumphs. Rumor, with its wonted credulity, had ascribed to Louvois, the powerful minister of Louis XIV. the crime of suicide. His death was sudden, but not by his own arm; he fell a victim, if not to disease, to the revenge of a woman. In a night, the most powerful man in Europe, one who was passionately fond of place, was summoned from the splendors of his active career. The man, whose power extended to every cabinet, whose views embraced the policy of continents, was called away. How much business was arrested in progress!—how many projects defeated! how many secrets buried in the silence of the grave! Who should disentangle the interests, which his policy had rendered complicate? Who should terminate the wars which he had begun? Who should follow up the blows, which he had aimed? Well might he have exclaimed to the angel of death, 'Ah, give me but a little time; a short reprieve; spare me, till I can give a check to the Duke of Savoy; a checkmate to the Prince of Orange!'—'No! No! You shall not have a single, single minute.'—Death is as inexorable to the prayer of ambition, as to the entreaty of despair. The ruins of the Palatinate; the wrongs of the Huguenots were to be avenged; and Louvois, like Louis XI. and like the rest of mankind, was to learn, that the passion for life, whether expressed in the language of superstition, of abject despondency, or of the desire of continued power, could not prolong existence for a moment.

But though the love of life may be declared a universal instinct, though the contempt of death is hypocrisy, it does not follow that death is usually met with abjectness. It belongs to virtue and to manliness to meet the inevitable decree with firmness. It is often met voluntarily; but even then the natural passion is declared. A sense of shame, a desire of plunder, a hope of emolument,—these, not less than a sense of duty, are motives sufficient to influence men to meet danger and defy death. Yet the love of life appears in the midst of hardihood. The common hireling soldier bargains to expose himself to the deadly fire of an hostile army, whenever his employers may command it; he does it, in a controversy of

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which he knows not the merits, for a party to which he is essentially indifferent, for purposes which, perhaps, if his mind were enlightened, he would labor to counteract. The life of the soldier is a life of contrast; of labor and idleness; it is a life of routine, easy to be endured, and leading only at intervals to danger. The love of ease, the certainty of obtaining the means of existence, the remoteness of peril, conspire to tempt a crowd of adventurers, and thus the armies of Europe have never suffered from any other limit, than the wants of the treasury. But the same soldier would fly precipitately from any danger, which he had not bargained to encounter. The merchant will visit the deadliest climates in pursuit of gain; he will pass over regions, where the air is known to be corrupt, and disease to have anchored itself in the hot, heavy atmosphere. And this he will attempt repeatedly, and with firmness, in defiance of the crowds of corpses, which he may see carried by wagon loads to the grave-yards. But the same merchant would fly with precipitate panic from his own residence in a more favored clime, should it be invaded by epidemic disease. The same merchant, who would fearlessly meet the worst forms of a storm at sea, and coolly take his chance of escaping the fever as he passed through New Orleans, would shun New York in the season of the cholera, and shrink from any danger which was novel and unexpected, differing from the perils which he had prepared himself to disregard. The widows of India ascend the funeral pile with a fortitude which man could never display; and readily, it is said cheerfully and emulously, yield up their lives to a barbarous usage, which, if men were called upon to endure, would never have been perpetuated through successive generations. Yet is it to be supposed, that these unhappy victims are indifferent to the charms of existence, or blind to the terrors of death? Calmly as they may lay themselves upon the pyre, they would beg for mercy, were their execution to be demanded in any other way; they would confess their fear of death, were it not that love and honor and custom pronounce their doom.

No class of men in the regular discharge of duty incur danger more frequently than the honest physician. Never recreant to his trust, there is no form of malignant disease, with which he fails to become acquainted; no hospital so crowded with contagious death, that he dares not walk freely through its wards. His vocation is among the sick and the dying; he



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is the familiar friend of those who are suffering under infectious disease; and he never shrinks from the horror of observing it under all its aspects. He must do so with calmness; he may not suffer his equanimity to be disturbed; as he inhales the poisoned atmosphere, he must coolly reflect on the medicines, which may mitigate the sufferings, that he cannot remedy. Nay; after death has ensued, he must search with the dissecting knife for the hidden cause and the phenomena of disease, if so by multiplying his own perils he may discover some alleviation for the afflictions of humanity. And why is this? Because the physician is indifferent to death? Because he is steeled and hardened against the fear of it? Because he despises or pretends to despise it? By no means. As a class of men, it is the especial business of physicians to value life; to combat death; to cherish the least spark of animated existence. And the habit of caring for the lives of others, is far from leading them to an habitual indifference to their own. The instinct of life displays itself in the physician as in other men; he shuns every danger, but such as the glory of his profession commands him to defy.

Thus we are led to an explanation of the anomaly of suicide, to reconcile the apparent contradiction of a fear of death, which is voluntarily encountered. It may seem a paradox; yet the fear of dying has sometimes prompted suicide, and the man, who seeks to destroy himself, at the very moment of perpetrating his crime, fears death and feels the passion for life. Do you ask for evidence? Menace him with death under a different form from that which he has chosen; and he will fly from it like other men. He will defend himself against the hand of the assassin, though he might be ready to cut his own throat; he will, if at sea, and the ship were sinking in a storm, labor with the best to save it from going down, even if he had formed the design to leap into the ocean in the first moment of a calm. Place him in the van of an army; it is by no means certain that he will not prove a coward; tell him the cholera is about to rage, and he will deluge himself with preventive remedies; send him to a house attacked with yellow fever, and he will steep himself in vinegar and carry with him an atmosphere of camphor. It is only under the one aspect, which the mind in some insane excitement has chosen, that the terrors of death do not overpower the sentiment of disgust and disappointment, which may induce

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him to desire to die, because he has failed of obtaining all the happiness, for which he had hoped.

It will not be difficult, then, to set a right value on the declaration of those, who affect for death not indifference merely, but contempt. It is pure affectation, or the indulgence of a Mephistopheles levity; and must excite either compassion or disgust, according as the affectation is marked by the spirit of fiendish scoffing or of human vanity and self-deception. A French moralist tells us of a valet, who danced merrily on the scaffold, where he was to be broken on the wheel. We have known an instance of a woman, who was hanged for aiding her paramour to kill her husband. She was a complete sensualist, one to whom life was every thing, and the loss of it the total shipwreck of every thing, a wreck the more absolute, since not even reputation, which woman always values, could be saved. Now this woman on her way to the gallows, was accompanied by a clergyman of no very great ability; and all along the road, with her death in plain sight, she amused herself in teasing the good man, whose wits were no match for her raillery. He had been buying a new chaise, quite an event in the life of a humble countryman, and when he spoke of the next world, she would amuse herself in praising his purchase. If he deplored her fate and her prospects, she would grieve at his exposure to the inclement weather; and laughed and chatted, as if she had been driving to a wedding, and not to her own funeral. And why was this? Because death was not feared? No; but because death *was* feared, and feared intensely. They say, that in India the women, who are burned to death on the piles of their deceased husbands, often utter shrieks that would pierce the hearers to the soul; and to prevent the diffusion of a compassion which, if it were to become active, would endanger the reign of superstition, the priests with the clangor of drums and cymbals, drown the terrific cries of their victims. So it is with those, who go to death with merriment. They dread death; and they seek to drown the noise of his approaching footsteps, by the sound of their own ribaldry. If the scaffold often rings with a jest, it is because the mind shrinks from the solemnity of death.

Perhaps the most common device for averting the mind from death itself, is in directing all the thoughts to the manner of dying. *Vanitas vanitatum!* Vanity does not give up its

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hold; but displays itself even in the last hour. Men desire to pass from life with distinction, to be buried in state; and the last thoughts are employed on the decorum of the moment, or in the anticipation of funereal splendors. It was no uncommon thing among the Romans for a rich man to appoint an heir, on condition that his obsequies should be celebrated with costly pomp. 'When I am dead,' said an Indian chief, who died at Washington, 'When I am dead, let the big guns be fired over me.' The words were thought worthy of being engraved on his tomb-stone, but are in no wise remarkable; they are but a plain expression of a very common vanity; the same, which leads the humblest to desire that at least a rough stone may be placed at the head of his grave, and demands the erection of the splendid mausoleums and costly tombs for the mistaken men,

Who by the proofs of death pretend to live.

Among the ancients, it was not uncommon for an opulent man, while yet in health, to order his own sarcophagus; and now-a-days, men sometimes build their own tombs, for the sake of securing a satisfactory monument. We knew a vain man, who had done this at a great expense; and the motive was so apparent, that men laughed with the sexton of the parish, who wished that the builder might not be kept long out of the interest of his money.

But it is not merely in the decorations of the grave, that this vanity is displayed. Saladin, in his last illness, instead of his usual standard, ordered his shroud to be uplifted in front of his tent; and the herald, who displayed this winding sheet as a flag, was commanded to exclaim aloud: 'Behold! this is all which Saladin, the vanquisher of the East, carries away of all his conquests.' He was wrong there. He came naked into the world, and he left it naked. Grave-clothes were a superfluous luxury, and to the person receiving them, as barren of comfort as his sceptre or his scymitar. Saladin was vain. He sought in dying to contrast the power he had enjoyed with the feebleness of his condition; to pass from the world in a striking antithesis; to make his death scene an epigram. All was vanity.

A century ago it was the fashion for culprits to appear on the scaffold in the dress of dandies. Vanity made it the mode to be hanged in the attire of fops. Some centuries before, it

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was the privilege of noblemen, if they were worth hanging, to escape the gallows, and perish on the block. The Syrian priests had foretold to the emperor Heliogabalus, that he would be reduced to the necessity of committing suicide; believing them true prophets, he kept in readiness silken cords and a sword of gold.

Admirable privilege of the nobility, to be beheaded instead of hanged! Enviable prerogative of imperial dignity, to be strangled with a knot of silk, or to be assassinated with a golden sword!

> Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke,
> (Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke.)
> No, let a charming chintz, and Brussels lace
> Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face:
> One would not sure be frightful, when one's dead,
> And—Betty—give this cheek a little red.

The thoughts of vanity, in the example chosen by the poet, extended to appearances after death; vanity is not inactive in the dying hour. But here we should look for proof to the precincts of courts, to the scene where folly used to reign by prescriptive right; where the ample means of gratification permitted no obstacles to indulgence. The foibles of the poor are bounded by their poverty; the vices of humble life are concealed in the obscurity of neglect and oblivion. To trace the display of vanity, triumphant in the hour of mortality, observe the voluptuaries, whom the pride of opulence has rendered indifferent to decorum. Enter the palaces, where caprice gives law and pleasures consume life. The idle fool has leisure for folly; and the fit lasts to the latest moment. Go there, and observe the harlot's euthanasia. The French court was at Choisy, when Madame de Pompadour felt the pangs of a mortal malady. It had been the established etiquette, that none but princes and persons of royal blood, should breathe their last in Versailles. Proclaim to the gay circles of Paris, that a thing, new and unheard of, is to be permitted! Announce to the world, that the rules of palace propriety and Bourbon decorum are to be broken! Open, ye palace doors, for the king's favorite mistress! Ye chambers, where vice has fearlessly lived and laughed, but not been permitted to expire, be ye now the witnesses of the novel scene!

The marchioness questioned the physicians firmly; she

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perceived their hesitation; she felt the hand of death; and she determined, says the historian, to depart in the state of a queen. Louis XV., himself not capable of a strong emotion, was yet eager to concede to his dying friend the consolation which she coveted, the opportunity to reign till her last gasp. The courtiers thronged round the death-bed of a woman, who distributed favors with the last exhalations of her breath; and the king hurried to name to public offices the persons whom she recommended with the faltering accents of departing life. The sick chamber was a scene of state; the princes and grandees still entered to pay their homage to the woman, whose power did not yield to mortal disease, and were surprised to find her richly attired. The traces of death in her countenance were concealed by rouge. She reclined on a splendid couch; questions of public policy were discussed by ministers in her presence; she gloried in holding to the last the reins of the kingdom in her hands. Even a sycophant clergy showed respect to the expiring favorite; and felt no shame at sanctioning with their frequent visits the vices of a woman, who had entered the palace only as an adulteress. Having complied with the rites of the Roman church, she next sought the approbation of the philosophers. She lisped no word of penitence; she shed no tears of regret. The curate left her as she was in the agony: 'Wait a moment,' said she, 'we will leave the house together.'

The dying mistress, still able to distribute favors, may ensure obedience; the dead are disregarded by the selfish. Hardly had she expired, but the scene changed. Two domestics carried out her body on a hand-barrow from the palace to her private home. The king stood at the window, as her remains were carried by. 'The Marchioness will have bad weather on her journey.'

It is a common remark that the ruling passion displays itself in the last hour. The flickering lamp blazes with unusual brightness, just as it expires. 'The fit gives vigor, as it destroys.' He, who has but a moment remaining, is released from the common motives for dissimulation; and time, that lays his hand on every thing else, destroying beauty, undermining health, and wasting the powers of life, spares the ruling passion, which is connected with the soul itself. That passion

> ——— sticks to our last sand.
> Consistent in our follies and our sins,
> Here honest nature ends as she begins.

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Napoleon expired during the raging of a whirlwind, and his last words showed that his thoughts were in the battle-field. The meritorious author of the Memoir of Cabot, a work which in accuracy and in extensive research is very far superior to most of the late treatises on maritime discovery, tells us, that the discoverer of our continent, in a hallucination before his death, believed himself again on the ocean, and once more steering in quest of adventure over the waves, which knew him as the steed knows its rider. How many a gentle eye has been dimmed with tears, as it read the fabled fate of Fergus MacIvor! Not inferior to the admirable hero of the romance, was the Marquis of Montrose. He had fought for the Stuarts, and he fell into the hands of the Presbyterians. He was condemned to die; his head and his limbs were ordered to be severed from his body, and to be hanged on the Tolbooth in Edinburgh, and in other public towns of the kingdom. He listened to the sentence with the pride of loyalty and the fierce anger of a generous defiance. 'I wish,' he exclaimed, 'I had flesh enough to be sent to every city in Christendom, as a testimony to the cause for which I suffer.'

But let us take an example of sublimer virtue. Let us look for a man, who lived without a stain from youth to age, and displayed an unwavering consistency to the last; a man who was in some degree our own. The age of unlimited monarchy has passed; and the period of popular sovereignty has begun to dawn. It is one of the worst features of the tory party, which was so long in the ascendant, that self-defence required it to pursue, with relentless censure, the men who fell as victims to its licentious ambition. Wat Tyler struck down an officer, who attempted an insult on the chastity of his daughter. There is not a father in New England, who would not have applauded the blow. And when he was invited to a peaceful conference with the king, he was basely assassinated in the royal presence. Yet an English poet was obliged to retract the defence of the reputation of Wat Tyler. A very similar incident in Swiss history has been embalmed in the verse of one of the finest poets, who have ever awakened a nation's sympathies by the power of genius. It becomes America to rescue from undeserved censure the names and the memory of the men, who have fallen victims to their unconquerable love of republican liberty.

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Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held
The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repelled
The fierce Epirot, and the African bold,
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
The drift of hollow states, hard to be spelled,
Then to advise, how war may, best upheld,
Move by her two great nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage: *besides to know*
*Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,*
*What severs each, thou 'st learned, which few have done.*
*The bounds of either sword to thee we owe;*
Therefore on thy firm hand religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

He, that would discern the difference between a powerful mind and a shallow wit, may compare this splendid eulogy of Milton with the superficial levity in the commentary of Warton. It is a sort of fashion to call Sir Henry Vane a fanatic. And what is fanaticism? True, he was a rigid Calvinist. True, he has written an obscure book on the mystery of godliness, of which all that we understand is excellent, and we may, therefore, infer that the vein of the rest is good. But does this prove him a fanatic? If to be the uncompromising defender of civil and religious liberty be fanatacism; if to forgive injuries be fanaticism; if to believe that the mercy of God extends to all his creatures, and may reach even the angels of darkness, be fanaticism; if to have earnestly supported in the Long Parliament the freedom of conscience,—if to have repeatedly, boldly and zealously interposed to check the persecution of Roman Catholics,—if to have labored that the sect which he least approved, should enjoy their property in security, and be safe from all penal enactments for non-conformity,—if in his public life to have pursued a career of firm, conscientious, disinterested consistency, like La Fayette, never wavering, never trimming, never changing,—if all this be fanaticism, then was Sir Harry Vane a fanatic. Not otherwise. The people of Massachusetts declined to continue him in office; and when his power in England was great, he requited the Colony with the benefits of his favoring influence. He opposed the tyranny of Charles I., without becoming one of his judges. He opposed the tyranny of Cromwell. When that extraordinary man entered the House of Commons to

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break up the Parliament, which was about to pass laws, that would have endangered his supremacy, Vane rebuked him for his treason. When the musketeers entered the hall of parliament, if others were silent, Vane exclaimed to the most powerful man in Europe, 'This is not honest. It is against morality and common honesty.' Well might Cromwell, since his designs were criminal, reply, 'Sir Henry Vane! Sir Henry Vane! The Lord deliver me from Sir Henry Vane.'

Though Vane suffered from the usurpation of Cromwell, he lived to see the Restoration. He was then, in the ascendency of the Stuarts, like La Fayette among the Bourbons, equally the stanch enemy of tyranny. The austere man, whom Cromwell had feared, now struck terror into the hearts of a corrupt and licentious court. It was resolved to destroy him. In a different age or country the poisoned cup, or the knife of the assassin might have been used; in that age of corrupt faction, a judicial murder was resolved upon. His death was a deliberate crime, contrary to the royal promise, contrary to the express vote of 'the healing parliament;' contrary to law, to equity, to the evidence. But it suited the designs of a monarch, who feared to be questioned by a statesman of incorruptible elevation of character. And now it is, that we behold Sir Henry Vane in the season of death. The night before his execution, he enjoyed the society of his family; time passed, as if he had been reposing in his own mansion. The next morning he was beheaded. The least concession would have saved him. Would he have denied the supremacy of parliament, would he have betrayed the constitution of England, the king would have restrained the malignity of his hatred. 'Ten thousand deaths for me,' exclaimed Vane, 'ere I will stain the purity of my conscience.' Historians describe him as fond of life; he submitted to his end with the firmness of a patriot, the serenity of a Christian.

> 'I give and I devise, (Old Euclio said,
> And sighed,) my lands and tenements to Ned.'
> Your money, sir?—'My money, sir! what all?
> Why,—if I must,—(then wept,) I give it Paul.'
> The manor, sir?—'The manor! hold,' he cried,
> 'Not that,—I cannot part with that,'—and died.

Lorenzo de' Medici, upon his death bed, sent for Savonarola to receive his confession and grant him absolution. The se-



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vere anchorite questioned the dying sinner with unsparing rigor. 'Do you believe entirely in the mercy of God?'—Yes, I feel it in my heart. 'Are you truly ready to restore all the possessions and estates, which you have unjustly acquired?'—The dying Duke hesitated; he counted up in his mind the sums which he had hoarded; delusion whispered that nearly all were the acquisition of honest inventions; self-love suggested that the sternest censor would take but little from his opulence. The pains of hell were threatened if he denied; and he gathered courage to reply, that he was ready to make restitution. Once more the unyielding priest resumed his inquisition. 'Will you resign the sovereignty of Florence, and restore the democracy of the republic?' Lorenzo, like Macbeth, had acquired a crown; but, unlike Macbeth, he saw sons of his own, about to become his successors. He gloried in the hope of being the father of princes, the founder of a line of hereditary sovereigns. Should he resign this brilliant hope? Should he be dismayed by the wild words of a visionary? Should he tremble at the threats of a confessor? Should he stoop to die as a merchant, when he had reigned as a monarch? No! though hell itself were opening beneath his bed. 'Not that! I cannot part with that.' Savonarola left his bedside with indignation, and Lorenzo died without shrift.

> And you, brave Cobham, to the latest breath,
> Shall feel your ruling passion strong in death,
> Such in those moments as in all the past,—
> 'Oh! save my country, Heaven!' shall be your last.

Such was the exclamation of the worthy Quincy, whose virtues have been fitly commemorated by the pious reverence of his son. The celebrated Admiral Blake breathed his last, as he came in sight of England, happy in at least descrying the land, of which he had advanced the glory by his brilliant victories. Quincy died, as he came in sight of Massachusetts. He loved his family; but his last words were for his country. 'Oh that I might live,'—it was his dying wish,—'to render to my country one last service.'

The coward dies panic-stricken; the superstitious man dies with visions of terror floating before his fancy. We knew an instance of a man, who was so terrified by the apprehension of eternal wo, that he hurried as if to meet it, and in his despair, cut his throat. The phenomenon was strange; but the

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fact is unquestionable. The giddy, that are near a precipice, totter towards the brink, which they would shun. Every body remembers the atheism and bald sensuality of the septuagenarian Alexander VI. History hides her face, as she relates his detestable and scandalous vices; she hides her face that her blushes for humanity may not be visible. And the name of his natural son, Cesar Borgia, is a proverb; a synonym for the most vicious incarnation of unqualified selfishness. Now learn from one story the infinite baseness of a cowardly nature. Borgia had, by the most solemn oaths, induced the Duke of Gravina, Oliverotto, Vitellozzo Vitelli, and another, to meet him in Senigaglia, for the purpose of forming a treaty. The truth of the tale is attested by Macchiavelli. Treachery was prepared, the order was issued for the massacre of Oliverotto and Vitelli. Will it be believed? Vitelli, as he expired, begged of the infamous Borgia, his assassin, to obtain of Alexander a dispensation for his omissions; a release from purgatory. Can there be greater human weakness?

Yet the death-bed of Cromwell himself was not free from superstition. He asked, when near his end, if the elect could never fall. 'Never,' replied Godwin the preacher. 'Then am I safe,' said the man, whose last years had been stained by cruelty and tyranny; 'then am I safe, for I am sure I was once in a state of grace.'

Ximenes, to the last, languished from disappointment at the loss of power and the want of royal favor. A smile from Louis would have cheered the death-bed of Racine. They were the victims of a weak passion, which was not gratified, and which they could not subdue.

In a brave mind the love of honor endures to the last. 'Don't give up the ship,' cried Lawrence, as his life blood was flowing in torrents. Abimelech groaned that he fell ignobly by the hand of a woman. We knew a man, who expressed in his last moments more apprehension, lest his fortune should not be enough to pay his debts, than sympathy for the approaching poverty of his family. The sense of honor was piqued; he feared his good name would suffer among those, whose confidence in him had exceeded his ability of requital. We have ever admired the gallant death of Sir Richard Grenville, who, in a single ship, encountered a numerous fleet; and when mortally wounded, husbanded his strength, till he could summon his victors to bear testimony to his courage and his

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patriotism. 'Here die I, Richard Grenville, with a joyous and quiet mind, for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought to do, fighting for his country, queen, religion and honor.'

The public of Boston and its vicinity have been recently instructed in the details of the treason of Benedict Arnold, by an inquirer, who has compassed earth and sea in search of historic truth, and has merited the applause of his country, not less for candor and judgment, than for diligence and ability. The victim of the treason was André. He protested against the manner of his death; and not against dying. He dreaded the gallows,—not the loss of life. The sentiment in his breast was one of honest pride. His mind repelled the service of treachery; and holding a stain upon his honor to be worse than a sentence of death, his feelings were those of poignant bitterness, in the fear lest the manner of his execution should be taken as evidence, that the hangman closed for him a career of ignominy. He felt the sense of honor, the rising emotions of pride, the same sentiment which filled the breast of Lawrence, of Nelson, and of Wolfe; a keen sense, which to the latter rendered death easy and triumphant, because it was attended by victory; but, in the case of André, added new bitterness to the cup of affliction, by menacing opprobrium as a necessary consequence of a disgraceful execution.

Finally: a well balanced mind meets death with calmness, resignation and hope. Saint Louis died among the ruins of Carthage; a Christian king, laboring in vain to expel the religion of Mahomet from the spot, where Dido had planted the gods of Syria. 'My friends,' said he, 'I have finished my course. Do not mourn for me. It is natural, that I, as your chief and leader, should go before you. You must follow me. Keep yourselves in readiness for the journey.' Then giving his son his blessing, and the kindest and best advice, he received the sacrament, closed his eyes, and died, as he repeated from the Psalms, 'I will come into thy house; I will worship in thy holy temple.'

The curate of St. Sulpice asked the confessor, who had shrived Montesquieu on his death bed, if the penitent had given satisfaction. 'Yes,' replied father Roust, 'like a man of genius.' The curate was dissatisfied; he was unwilling to leave to the dying man a moment of tranquillity; and he addressed him, 'Sir, are you truly conscious of the greatness of God?' 'Yes,' said the departing philosopher, 'and of the littleness of man.'

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How calm were the last moments of Cuvier! What benevolence of feeling and self-possession diffused serenity round his departure! Confident that the hand of death was upon him, he submitted to the application of remedies, that he might gratify his friends, who still hoped to preserve his life. They had recourse to leeches; and with delightful simplicity the great naturalist observed, *that it was he who had discovered that leeches possess red blood.* The discovery was one, which he had made in his youth, and which was communicated to the public in one of the early memoirs that first made him known. The thoughts of the dying naturalist recurred to the scenes of his early life, to the coast of Normandy, where, in the solitude of conscious genius, he had roamed by the side of the ocean, and had won his way to fame by observing the wonders of animal life, which are nourished in its depths. He remembered his youth of poverty, the sullen rejection which his first claims for advancement had received; and all the vicissitudes of action and of suffering, through which he had been led to the highest distinctions in science. The son of the Wirtemberg soldier, too weak in bodily health to embrace the profession of his father, had found his way into the secrets of nature, and revealed to an admiring world the novelties, which his sagacity and power of comparison had discovered. The man, who in his own country had been refused the means of becoming the village pastor of an ignorant peasantry, had charmed the most polished circles of Paris by the clearness of his descriptions, as he had commanded the attention of the Deputies of France by the grace and fluency of his elocution. And now he was calmly predicting his departure. His respiration became rapid. Raising his head, he suffered it to fall, as if in meditation. His soul had passed to its Creator without a struggle. 'Those, who entered afterwards, would have thought that the noble old man, seated in his arm chair by the fire-place, was asleep; and would have walked softly across the room for fear of disturbing him.' Heaven had but 'recalled his own.'

The death of Haller, the great predecessor of Cuvier, was not more tranquil. His declining years were spent among the mountains of his own favorite Switzerland; and when the hour of death approached, he watched like a philosopher the ebbing of life, and observed the beating of his pulse till the power of sensation was gone.

A tranquil death is alone suited to the man of science,—to

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the scholar. He should cultivate letters to the last moment of his life; he should resign public honors, as calmly as one would take off a domino on returning from a mask. He should listen to the signal for his departure, not with exultation, and not with indifference. He should respect the dread solemnity of the change, and repose in hope on the bosom of death. He should pass, without boldness and without fear, from the struggles of inquiry to the certainty of knowledge; from a world of doubt to a world of truth.

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ART. VI.—*Hutchinson's Third Volume.*

*The History of Massachusetts Bay, from* 1749 *to* 1774; *comprising a detailed Narrative of the Origin and Early Stages of the American Revolution.* By THOMAS HUTCHINSON, Esq. L.L. D., formerly Governor of the Province. Edited from the Author's MS., by his Grandson, the Rev. John Hutchinson, M. A. London. 1828.

THIS book was thought important enough to justify a formal vote of the Massachusetts Historical Society, requesting its publication, and a subsequent subscription for five hundred copies in this quarter, without which the editor hesitated to proceed. It seems, however, to have attracted but little attention, except from the few, who are curious in antiquities, while book-making speculations from superficial observers of our manners and public institutions are sought for with a kind of passion. To complain of this, or to inquire for its causes, is not our present purpose. In literary, as in political affairs, there is no appeal from the decision of the public. But we may be allowed, at least, to recommend a different taste, by introducing to notice from time to time such British works, as, with apparently greater value, have from some cause failed of proportionate success.

The title page, as given above, is not the one which is found in the copies transmitted to subscribers in this country. The dedication to Lord Lyndhurst, and a Preface of ten or more pages are also wanting. The editor probably thought that something might be necessary to recommend the work to notice at home, which would appear altogether superfluous here. The

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omission is not material: yet we regret it, because the preface contains the evidence of the liberality that gave the impulse to the publication, and still more, because it gives a few hints respecting the author; the more valuable, as the promise of a separate biographical work contained in it, has not been and from the lapse of time seems not likely to be fulfilled.

The story of Thomas Hutchinson's life carries its moral with it,—apart from being another memorable example of the folly of the best grounded human expectations. Sprung from a respected family in the Province, and passing creditably through his youth, he issued from Harvard University at the early age of sixteen, to enter at once into the active pursuits of life. His first object seems to have been wealth, for which he became a merchant; but his success not answering expectation, he turned his attention to other pursuits. He became a politician, and a student of colonial records. The confidence of his fellow citizens was earned by the excellence of his private character, and by the sober manner in which he conducted himself in all his social relations. In the year 1737,* at twenty-six years of age, he was chosen a representative from Boston in the General Court. Shortly afterwards he was made a selectman of the town, and entrusted with important business in Great Britain, which he executed to the public satisfaction. He distinguished himself in opposition to the scheme of the land bank, which arose about that time and for many years affected the prosperity of the Colony. And it was only after the lapse of ten years, when he had become Speaker of the House of Representatives, that mainly by his exertions a proper remedy was adopted. He became successively member of the Council, Judge of Probate, Lieutenant-Governor, and Chief-Justice,—all which stations he held for some time together; and at least in the Judicial ones, he acquitted himself very much to the satisfaction of his fellow citizens.

From the time of Sir Francis Bernard's departure, he was in fact, and in 1771 became in name Governor of the Province. The crowning object of his ambition proved the ruin of his fortunes. His political opinions had already shaken him among his countrymen, not to mention the grasping disposition

* It may not be unsuitable here to remark upon the incorrectness in dates of the notice of Governor Hutchinson in Dr. Eliot's biographical work. The lapse of time, as well as the deficiencies of the book, renders another on a larger scale much to be desired at the present moment.

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manifested in a union of so many responsible and lucrative offices. The difficult circumstances attending his assumption of the government completed his overthrow. He was compelled to choose between his offices on the one side, and his hardly-earned popularity on the other. He did not choose with the boldness required by the crisis,—but like all timid politicians, endeavored to temporize by sacrificing principle at the shrine of expediency. The struggle lasted five years, until an act, in itself of perhaps ambiguous morality, exposed to the American public certain confidential letters to persons in England, recommending measures very little short of the horrors of a military despotism. The result was decisive. The last cords which had bound his countrymen in affection to him, were then snapped, and he found himself compelled to remove from the scenes of early promise and brilliant later success, to become an unpitied though a pensioned exile at the Court of Great Britain. Private miseries followed hard upon public disappointment. A beloved daughter was taken from him by death, in the autumn of 1777, and a son in 1780. He outlived the latter but a little while, regretting to his latest breath, his separation from his native land; and ever casting a longing, lingering look towards his favorite and beautiful spot upon Milton Hill.

Such was the termination of a career, which, at its outset, promised very different results. Nor is it possible, in seeking for the causes of the change, to trace them all to the man himself. He had done more than most persons to secure success, and it was only one of those extraordinary events which occur to baffle the penetration of the best human sagacity, that turned his efforts to his own destruction. Without pretension to the higher qualities of mind, he possessed such as fitted him better to influence the circle immediately around him. Our countrymen admire genius, but they follow reason. His capacity exerted itself well in the ordinary paths of human action, and the mild gravity of his external manners promoted the effect it was likely to produce. Nor would the worldly disposition which often attends this union of qualities, have been in him an obstacle to fortune, had he not fallen upon a moment when the standard of human conduct soared far above the level of its ordinary elevation. He was tried by that standard, and he failed. We pity, while we pronounce the decree. Mr. Austin's Life of Gerry contains three intercepted letters from lead-

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ing refugees. That of Hutchinson strikingly contrasts with the others by its humility and evidence of a broken spirit.—After reading it, the tone of the volume before us ceased to excite any feeling, but one of compassion for the author.

Governor Hutchinson has other and better claims upon our gratitude. He labored hard in the field of our colonial antiquities, producing for a result two volumes of early history, which will ever be considered a mine of wealth by all future historians and antiquaries; though their minuteness of detail and fidelity of research will not compensate with most general readers for their length and moderate literary execution. Our annals, to be interesting, should be thrown into general masses, and treated with brevity,—thus only will the valuable philosophy to be deduced from them ever be made practically and extensively beneficial. The course of events would aid such a scheme. One portion, forexample, might furnish the instructive lesson of the settlement and prosperity of Massachusetts under the first charter. Another might date from the accession of William, or the reception of the second charter, and extend to the general peace of 1763,—while a third could comprehend the shorter but more eventful period of the Revolution. Yet whoever should think proper to attempt a plan like this, would very soon discover, that without the aid of Hutchinson's work, his toil must have proved the labor of a life.

The volume before us begins with the year 1749, resuming where the author had before left off, and extends to the time of his own departure from Massachusetts in 1774. Though we cannot bestow upon it the sort of commendation merited by its predecessors, yet what is lost in impartiality is in a degree made up by the greater animation of the style. A prominent actor in political affairs will rarely become a very disinterested historian of the events in which he was concerned, but he will be far more agreeable to read, as the elation of victory or the bitterness of defeat will impart to his narrative all the hues of the passions, which have been nursed in the progress of the struggle.

Yet the first part of this volume is cold, and does not, as it appears to us, devote sufficient attention to the influence of the wars during the administrations of Shirley and Pownall, upon subsequent events. We have not elsewhere seen this very fully developed. The French power, while it lasted, kept the colonists in a state of perpetual alarm. It impelled them to



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make exertions, the amount of which has seldom been exceeded by nations, even when contending for existence. If it be for a moment considered, that at some periods one third of the whole effective force was in military service of one kind or another, that nearly all of it was called out in the course of these wars, and that the burden of taxes of the capital (Boston) was equal to two thirds of the income of the real estate, surely the spirit obtained in such a school of discipline, both active and passive, cannot and ought not to be overlooked.

The peace of 1783 came to put a new face upon affairs. A victorious war terminated in the acquisition by Great Britain of all the French possessions in North America,—and released the inhabitants of Massachusetts from all further anxiety respecting a neighboring enemy. Their exertions had not been without effect in procuring this triumphant result, and the sense of them had raised the people in the estimation of the mother country, as well as in their own. But the feelings it gave rise to were somewhat different on the two sides of the Atlantic. The rulers in Great Britain were evidently fixing more closely their attention on the Colonies, *as a resource:* while in America, a spirit was rising, only to be controlled by the exercise of the utmost discretion and delicacy of management. This spirit was perceived by our author, and is described in the following manner.

'Men whose minds were turned to calculations, found that the Colonies increased so rapidly as to double the number of inhabitants in a much shorter space of time than had been imagined.

'From the number of inhabitants then in the several Colonies, and a supposition that, for the time to come, they might increase in the same proportion as in the time past, the Colonies would soon exceed the parent state.

'These considerations did not of themselves immediately occasion any plan or even a desire of independency. *They produced a higher sense of the grandeur and importance of the Colonies.*

'Advantages in any respect, enjoyed by the subject in England, which were not enjoyed by the subjects in the Colonies, began to be considered in an invidious light; and men were led to inquire with greater attention than formerly into the relation in which the Colonies stood to the State from which they sprung.

'Every argument which would give color for the removal of this distinction was favorably received; and from various events,

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men were prepared to think more favorably of independency, before any measures were taken with a professed design of attaining to it.'

In these remarks the case is, however, but partly stated. The considerations mentioned were forcibly operating, though in different ways, on *both* sides of the Atlantic at the same time,—and on both sides were rapidly conducing to the same grand result. The British ministers, in seeking out for means to sustain the burdens imposed upon their country by the war, were pleased with the idea of relieving themselves by imposing a considerable share upon such thriving and prosperous colonists. These, on their side, freed from the fears which had kept them dependent, though they did not, as our author states, begin, yet certainly did pursue a more rigid scrutiny of their rights as English citizens. A collision was hastened by the careless ignorance of one party, and by the increasing intelligence of the other. The Ministers did not possess the penetrating eye of Mr. Burke, nor had they given themselves the pains to inquire what effect their measures might have on the people they were to bear upon. They had not traced the rise and progress of the colonial government; but with an indifference for which much of the English legislation of the last century is remarkable, holding colonists all the world over to be little else than slaves, they thought it beneath them to consider further than what they should command. The people of America were not disposed to be put down by an off-hand speech in a Parliament thousands of miles distant, and in which they had no voice. They were less convinced by the nearer and rougher argument of brute force,—and as this was all the reasoning which British superciliousness condescended at that time to bring forward, it is not to be wondered at that the dogged obstinacy of our countrymen resorted in self-defence to arms.

That the Ministry did not know what they were undertaking, seems manifest from the whole tenor of their conduct. They had done nothing to prepare the minds of the people in advance for so important a change in their relations with the mother country; nor had they paid attention to securing in the Colonies the support of any considerable portion of the more wealthy and intelligent class, whose tendencies in all States are in favor of established government. Their selection of an executive agent in Massachusetts was in the same spirit

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of rashness that inspired the whole scheme. Sir Francis Bernard was an English adventurer, seeking the office of Governor for the sake of the emolument, without a particle of claim upon the affections, or even the sympathy of the colonists. In one of his letters, he recommends himself to his employers 'because he came free from all bias in favor of this (the provincial) form of government, and able as well as willing to examine its defects.' However much this might have operated at home in his favor, it was not likely to make him more happy, or the people more satisfied in Massachusetts. The bare suspicion would at all times have been enough to set them in opposition to any Governor, the best founded in their affections, much more against a total stranger. Nor was Bernard better calculated to influence them by his personal character. He was blunt and irritable, little able to hold any check upon his feelings, and entirely without that nice tact, so necessary in difficult positions in government, which readily foresees the operation of words as well as actions upon others. In capacity, though respectable, he was not equal to those he was destined to oppose, and he had no soothing ways to undo the effect his adversaries could produce. On the contrary, even with the best intentions, he was perpetually committing blunders that involved him with them deeper and deeper, until they finally laid him completely at their mercy.

We are aware that our author assigns a different origin for all Bernard's difficulties. He traces them to the disappointment of a single family, in not obtaining for one of themselves the place of Chief Justice, and their anger that he (the author) should have gained it. To enable our readers to judge more clearly as to the reasonableness of this, we extract the passage.

'Governor Bernard had been but a few weeks in the Province, when he found himself under the necessity either of making a particular family and its connexions extremely inimical to him, or of doing what would not have been approved of by the greater part of the Province.

'Upon the death of the Chief Justice (Sewall) the first surviving judge and two other judges, together with several of the principal gentlemen of the bar, signified their desire to the Governor, that he would appoint the Lieutenant Governor (*i. e.* the author) to be the successor. When Mr. Shirley was in administration, he had encouraged, if not promised a gentleman at the

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bar (James Otis, Esq. of Barnstable) that upon a vacancy in the Superior Court, he should have a seat there. A vacancy happened, and Mr. Shirley, from a prior engagement, or for some other reason, disappointed him. He was at this time Speaker of the House of Representatives, and he made application to Governor Bernard that the first surviving judge might be appointed Chief Justice, and that he might take the place of a Judge. His son also, with great warmth, engaged in behalf of his father, and not meeting with that encouragement which he expected, vowed revenge, if he should finally fail of success.

'Several weeks elapsed, before any nomination was made, or any thing had passed between the Governor and Lieutenant Governor upon the subject. At length it was intimated to the Lieutenant Governor, that the Governor, when he had been applied to by many persons in his behalf, was at a loss to account for his silence. This caused a conversation, in which the Lieutenant Governor signified that he had desired no persons to apply in his behalf, and had avoided applying himself, that the Governor might the more freely use his own judgment, in appointing such person as should appear to him most fit. And soon after, upon the Lieutenant Governor's being informed of the Governor's intention to nominate him to the place, he gave his opinion, that a refusal to comply with the solicitations which had been made to the Governor by the other person, would cause a strong opposition to his administration, and at the same time, assured the Governor, that he would not take amiss the compliance, but would support his administration with the same zeal as if he had been appointed himself.

'The Governor declared that if the Lieutenant Governor should finally refuse the place, the other person would not be nominated. Thereupon, the Lieutenant Governor was appointed. The expected opposition ensued. The resentment in the disappointed persons was also as strong against the Lieutenant Governor for accepting the place, as if he had sought it, and had opposed their solicitations. Both the gentlemen had been friends to government. From this time they were at the head of every measure in opposition, not merely in those points which concerned the Governor in his administration, but in such as concerned the authority of Parliament, the opposition to which first began in this Colony, and was moved and conducted by one of them, both in the assembly and the town of Boston. From so small a spark, a great fire seems to have been kindled.'

This explanation appears to us to recommend itself, neither by its principles nor by the conclusion to which it is made to

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lead. Our author admits recommending (though it must be confessed, rather feebly as against himself,) a compliance which his whole statement makes out to be improper, and not likely to be approved by the greater part of the Province. And the defeat of a generally unpopular appointment is made the spark, which kindled all the fire that raged so long in the Province. At the same time, it ought to be kept in mind that the receiver of this unsolicited appointment was already Counsellor, Judge of Probate, and Lieutenant Governor. But we will not enlarge upon this topic. There is no mistaking the object of such observations, and similar ones may be found thoughout the volume. Its principal defect grows very naturally out of the circumstances under which it was written,—circumstances which created in the author a necessity either of condemning himself, or of ascribing to single individuals a very undue proportion of power over the events of the Revolution. It is most unquestionably true, that the vigorous mind of James Otis materially hastened the course of affairs. It is not impossible, though we admit no such thing, that private griefs may have sharpened the edge of his patriotism,—but in all this, though we may find a spark, yet there is no evidence of any material inflammable enough to catch from it. The tinder was furnished in plenty by the British Government. This and this only, is responsible for the consequent combustion. Had James Otis been ten times more powerful than he was, had he actually taken the place occupied by Hutchinson himself, he must have failed exactly as Hutchinson did. The only result would have been that his arm would have become nerveless against the force of the very same spirit and arguments he did in fact use, coming from other members of the community. Mr. Otis, like every other public man of that day, drew all his strength from the soundness of the principles entertained by him in common with the great body of citizens for whom he acted. This is a point essential to the formation of a correct opinion of the times. To be sure, they have the merit, and no small one it is, of setting forth those principles in the most effective manner, and of guiding the public mind to adopt the most practicable mode to maintain them, but they have no more. The substance was there as fixed as the rock of ages, and not all their united efforts would have made it a whit less immovable.

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The real cause of the difficulty may be found in the disposition of the rulers in Great Britain, to alter the relation between her and her Colonies without the consent of the latter. This was first manifested in 1763, immediately after the victorious war with France, by an order to the Governor of Massachusetts to procure a more exact account of the population of the Province,—then more decisively in the sugar act, and finally by the direct measure of the stamp act. There was no hesitation manifested by the colonists in resisting these measures. The struggle of the Revolution began at once. It was a struggle carried on by the *whole people*, and took its shape where it should have done, in *their* Representatives' hall, under the guidance of James Otis, and Oxenbridge Thatcher. The influence of Hutchinson, which had before that time been great, vanished almost immediately. The principal memorial of it may be found in the Address of the Legislature, upon the Stamp Act. His power over the minds of his colleagues in the council counteracted, in this case, the efforts of the Patriots in the other House. The result was a paper not expressive of the principles prevailing in the Province,—and bearing the stamp of expediency in almost every line. It is a little curious and very illustrative of the character of Hutchinson, that in another part of this volume he congratulates himself upon the effect this address was supposed to have had in producing the repeal of the obnoxious law,—and complains that he got no merit with the opposing party, because he begged for it as matter of favor, and did not claim it as a right. The power of nice discrimination between the moral influence of different lines of conduct does not appear to have been his brightest point.

The Patriots luckily considered the subject somewhat differently. The attempt to divert the current then running, feeble as it was, drew their attention to its author, and the means of preventing any thing of the kind through his agency for the future. The presence of Hutchinson in the Council, with several others holding official situations, was an embarrassment they naturally sought to get rid of. At the election of councillors, in 1766 they were all left out. The blow was as effective as it was mortifying. Governor Bernard felt it sensibly, and most indiscreetly allowed his feelings to escape in complaints in his public papers. This producing no effect far-

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ther than increased confidence in the propriety of the measure, the Governor and his Lieutenant resorted to a contrivance which is too curious not to be given in our author's words.

'Lieutenant Governor Hutchinson had been every year, until the present, elected for the council. The first session of the Assembly this year, he attended frequently, but did not vote, nor take any share in the debates. The Governor desired that he would accompany him in his coach, the first day of the next session, and after the Governor had delivered his speech, they left the council together. In the speech, the Governor had recommended "the support of the authority of government and the maintenance of the honor of the Province." The House in their answer to the speech take notice of the Lieutenant Governor's appearing in council, and remarked that, "if the honorable gentleman was introduced by your excellency, we apprehend that the happiest means of supporting the authority of the government, or maintaining the honor of the Province was not consulted therein. But, if he came in and took a seat of his own motion, we are constrained to say that it affords a new and additional instance of ambition and a lust of power to what we have before observed."

'This was illiberal treatment of the Lieutenant Governor, and brought into the speech by Mr. Hawley, a lawyer of distinguished character in the county of Hampshire, but of very strong resentments. He thought he had not been properly treated by the Lieutenant Governor as Chief Justice in the Court of Common Law, and to revenge himself, brought this public abuse against him in the Assembly.

'The Governor directed the Secretary to search the books for precedents, and caused his report to be laid before the House, accompanied with a message. The House thereupon came to a resolve that by charter, the Lieutenant Governor has no right to sit in council when he is not elected. As it was not advisable to lay claim to a right of voting in council after it had been so long dormant, it was a dispute *de lana caprina* but had a tendency, notwithstanding, to alienate the other branches from the Governor, at a time when union and harmony were more than ever to be desired. The Lieutenant Governor therefore signified, by a letter to the Governor, his determination to absent himself from the council-chamber, that he might not be the occasion of any controversy between the Governor and the House of Representatives, presuming that this act could not be any prejudice to the future claim of a Lieutenant Governor or to the right of the Governor and Council to admit the Lieutenant Governor, when

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they thought proper. This letter the Governor thought fit to lay before the House, and to desire that the dispute might subside without prejudice to the right in question. This did not satisfy the House. The Governor had repeatedly recommended to the Council to take the matter under their consideration, but a majority wished to avoid any share in the controversy. Upon a message from the House, they so far concerned themselves, as to resolve unanimously that "the Lieutenant Governor, by charter, has not any constitutional right to a seat at the board, either with or without a voice,—but so far as precedents, and one contemporaneous with the charter, can justify, he is excusable in taking his seat at the time referred to." Still this did not satisfy, and the House, in a further message to the Council, insisted, that as they had denied the constitutional right of the Lieutenant Governor to a seat in council, they must mean that his conduct could not be excused.'

Which was the most illiberal, the words by Mr. Hawley, or the commentary upon them, we shall not now stop to inquire. A few remarks upon that subject in general, may find their place presently. That a serious object was proposed in the extraordinary measure resorted to, can hardly admit of a reasonable doubt. The House understood it perfectly, and took, perhaps rather unexpectedly to the managers, the most decisive course to defeat it. *After* that event, it occurred to the Lieutenant Governor that the subject was *de lana caprina*, or matter of moonshine. But surely it was somewhat late to think of this, for the serious injury, in 'alienating the other branches from the Governor at a time when union and harmony were more than ever to be desired,' was already done. And it would be rather difficult to believe that these persons had not foreseen this, yet thought the object more than a compensation, if we did not know that there is an atmosphere in politics, which renders things the most strikingly placed but confusedly perceptible. The clearest comment upon the whole proceeding is to be found in the disapprobation of it substantially expressed by Lord Shelburne, then in office. Its operation was decisive. The opportunity for a recurrence of good feeling, presented by the repeal of the stamp act, was entirely thrown away. The party remained drawn up exactly as before.

Sir Francis Bernard was by no means a bad man,—and in ordinary times might have made a tolerable Governor. But



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he was not equal to the management of such delicate and critical points. He had taken no trouble to inform himself of the character of the people, and he disliked their form of government. The consequence was a perpetual variation, on his side, of the line between the executive and legislative branches. His messages do little else than coax, scold or bully; —sometimes he undertakes to dictate and sometimes to bargain. Almost always he puts himself somewhere in the wrong. Such a character was most of all unfit to deal with men whose modes of thinking were peculiarly stiff, whose habits were not a little formal, and who joined to all this a penetration and shrewdness of intellect, which knew how to take advantage of the least error. Between such parties, the result of a contest could not be doubtful. A series of little disputes terminated in an open breach. The British Ministry, too late aware of their mistake, recalled Bernard, not however before an address had passed the Legislature, requesting his removal.

Our author was selected to succeed him,—a choice which, had it been made in the first place, might have effected something;—but his agency in the scenes of the last five years of Bernard's administration had been too well understood, to afford any probability of an improvement by his means. Nevertheless, he did carry with him even at that late period many persons, his friends from long habit, and had in his favor the associations which birth, long residence and good private character rarely fail to produce. A cool judgment and the knowledge of his countrymen, procured from seeing them extensively in his official duties, rendered him far more a match than his predecessor for their antagonists. He only failed because he had no foundation to build upon. The finest capacity could have succeeded little better than his. The series of controversial papers emanating from his pen is highly respectable, as well for tact in avoiding difficulties, as for skill in urging positions,—and though not equal to that coming from the opposite side, the failure is more in the substance than the management.

We shall not pretend to follow the course of the disputes. Those who have any curiosity in regard to them, will find a rich resource in the volume of State Papers published in Boston some years ago, which supplies many important ones not to be found in the appendix to the work now under consider-

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ation. We cannot pass over in silence those involving the main question of the Revolution. Our author describes himself as alarmed at the progress, which the idea of Independence was making through the influence of town meetings in Boston, and corresponding committees in the country,—and tempted to make another and a final effort at resistance, by laying before the Legislature a labored argument in favor of the authority of Parliament over the Colonies. This was done by the Message of January 6th, 1773. The answers by the two Houses contain an equally labored reply. The contest has furnished few more valuable historical memorials, than these papers.

The argument of Governor Hutchinson rests entirely upon one principle in the English Law, and is built up by perpetual appeals to human authority. The single principle appears to us to be a narrow as well as entirely unsound one, and not to be fortified by the approbation of a hundred centuries. The assertion that a supreme, unlimited, uncontrollable authority must rest somewhere in a State, and that in Great Britain it rests in Parliament, is made by Judge Blackstone, hitherto the clearest expounder of the English Law. But he does not satisfactorily answer the objection he himself quotes from Locke, nor could he have found an answer to stand a moment before the following words from the reply to Hutchinson by his Council, 'Supreme or unlimited authority can with fitness belong only to the Sovereign of the Universe; and that fitness is derived from the perception of his nature. To such authority, directed by infinite wisdom and infinite goodness, is due both active and passive obedience; which, as it constitutes the happiness of rational creatures, should with cheerfulness and from choice be unlimitedly paid by them. But this can be said with truth of no other authority whatever.' Indeed, the very idea seems to us to be no less than a libel upon the Creator, and to change the constitution of England into an oligarchical despotism, not justified by any theory of government, nor by any historical experience. A single tyrant rules his subjects, by acting upon their fears. Nero himself could do no more than force society from its natural and proper basis, —the idea of any body in a state, which can do the same and be justified in so doing, is as extraordinary as it appears to us false,—especially, as in the case of England, it deprives her people of that essential original power to correct, which, after

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all that has been said of Parliament, we believe to constitute the very breath of its nostrils.

Believing, therefore, this idea of despotic sovereignty necessary somewhere, to be necessary no where in government, we consider the whole edifice raised upon it by the author as falling to the ground. For admitting that all the precedents possible could be summoned in its support, they never can in themselves go quite so far as to make a principle. A regard for the lessons which all human experience has taught to man, is one of the useful modes which the divine Providence has devised to secure some degree of permanency to the higher enjoyments of life,—but if, from a regard, it becomes implicit obedience, the very object of *improvement*, by avoiding evil and preserving good, is at once defeated. Most especially, in government, the sort of common law which habit has formed, though it should never be needlessly invaded, should not be allowed to invade in its turn. In considering such interests as those of mankind, we surely want some guides from higher sources. We must look to nature, the purposes of creation, to that philosophy which makes man a thinking being, and responsible for his actions to a God. *Here* is the point upon which our author's bark found its destruction. His mind had not expanded itself to the extent which the necessity demanded, it was locked up in the small compass of a precedent. All beyond was waste.

But in point of fact, the footing of Hutchinson upon precedent was as feeble as it had been upon principle. He was so unfortunate as to quote the exceptions to prove the rule. All history should be trusted more as a warning than a guide,—there is none in which the alternations of human passion will not furnish authorities for almost any side of a dispute. Is it not so in the constitutional questions of our own day? Is it not strikingly so in the case under consideration? In the early days of the Colony, the Puritans, moved by the ascendency of their brethren in Parliament, recognised its authority. In 1757, the hopes and fears of the colonists, as to the reimbursement of their expenses in the French war, were so operated upon (and that by this very man too,) as to produce from the General Court an explicit admission of the power of Parliament to legislate for them. The victory of the evil political maxim of temporary expediency, which ever has had and ever will have great influence in communities, produced in both these cases precedents, which, however time might have sanctioned them,

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must ever have been utterly unsafe and improper to rest upon. The only true foundation, intrinsic justice, is not to be found.

But we must consider on the other hand, the general spirit of the colonial history,—the origin of the settlement, and the mode in which it was conducted. Its founders did not rush to these shores, impelled by the blind instinct of self-preservation, and without a thought upon their ultimate fate. They acted understandingly from the beginning, first by purchasing a right to the territory they were to occupy, and next by securing a recognition of their social system by the sovereign who claimed them as subjects of Great Britain. That recognition was in the shape of a charter, granted by Charles the First, in which the nature of their situation was as well defined as the circumstances of the time would admit. Their rights to life, liberty and property were clearly reserved,—not a line admits the authority of Parliament to legislate unlimitedly for them, not a word can be found surrendering a single privilege which, as Englishmen and as men, properly belonged to them. The general tendency of all the subsequent history is to prove not only the existence, but the perfect understanding of this principle by the colonists. If examples were necessary, they may be found in the answer of the House of Representatives to the Governor, upon the occasion we are now considering. The exceptions, which form all the substance of his argument, are manifestly occasioned by temporary circumstances, acting against the usual disposition of the people. Their sense of weakness caused a constant anxiety during the period of the first Charter, which nothing but the long series of troubles in England prevented from being justified. Peace brought with it an attack upon this Charter; and the heats that followed that event are well known from the deposition of Sir Edmund Andros, from the natural consequence of which the leaders were only saved by the revolution that took place contemporaneously in the mother country. Another Charter was obtained from William the Third, varying a little, and but little, the terms of the compact,—the same so far as the rights of Parliament were involved;—and yet the spirit in which this new instrument was received manifests distinctly enough the feeling of the people. Then followed the Indian and French Wars, in which the dread of the nearest danger undoubtedly led to a neglect of that which was more remote. It led to a disposition to lean for support upon the power of Great Britain, and to avoid as

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much as possible causes of irritation. But the spirit, though working in another direction, was in substance the same. It is to be seen in the enthusiasm with which the project of the reduction of Canada was undertaken, and when that project succeeded, in the decided manner in which it resumed its old and well-accustomed channel. The cession of the French territories removed one great cause of dependence,—the Colony had acquired confidence in its own strength, and this was the moment, when the favorite doctrine of the people burst forth, in all its genuine vigor, and produced fruit early enough to show the depth to which its root had struck.

At the hazard of being tedious, we have sketched the outline of the whole colonial history, for the purpose of shewing how totally our author mistook its general character. The subject is worthy of more consideration than is usually given to it. Many people imagine that the Declaration of Independence forms the date of our liberty. In our opinion, that Declaration was only the falling of the fruit when it had become (perhaps a little prematurely) ripe. No new light burst upon the people upon the occasion. The separation from Great Britain involved no change in the political theories they had entertained. It was placed upon clear and definite grounds. The general and vague idea of liberty, that dazzling image with the face of a goddess and the heart of a prostitute, entered not into the question. The colonists had enjoyed the substance from the day they put their feet upon American ground. And it was not the desire to change, but the desire to keep and secure, which produced their Independence. They made little or no change in their domestic affairs, after that object was gained. One of the States at least retains the same form of government, which she had when she was a Province. To talk of the influence of the ambition of a few leaders, seems absurd, when they could do nothing the moment they ceased to appeal to principles, the soundness of which the community acknowledged. The people, that is the great mass of responsible members of the State had inherited, they did not acquire, the extraordinary jealousy of their rights, which is apparent through the century and a half of their preceding history; and when they complained, they could put their finger on the spot that was hurt. They asked a remedy. It was refused. They adopted the only alternative which was left, but they set nothing unnecessarily afloat. The

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practical good they aimed to arrive at was, not to put at hazard, through their own act, the good they had enjoyed.

And this is the only rational sort of revolution. Contrast this course with that of the inhabitants of France. Mr. Dumont of Geneva tells us, incidentally, that he happened to pass through a town in that country at the time fixed for the election of members to the States General. The people knew not how to proceed with an election; they had never even heard of such things as a President, Secretary, or voting ticket, and he says that he devoted half an hour of leisure time to drawing up a few rules for their direction in the dilemma. Here indeed was room for the ambition of a few. Here was a very small stock of knowledge and experience, upon which to set up the business of self-government. Can it be wondered at that the experiment failed? Even in England the conduct of John Hampden was heroic, because he devoted himself by it to the *instruction* of his countrymen in their rights. The country could not produce many Hampdens to guide them,—and it did produce enough then to confuse them. It is not saying too much, to assert that the intelligence of America rendered unnecessary that sort of superior guidance, and this was one of the causes, which contributed most powerfully to our success.

To return to Governor Hutchinson, from whom we have digressed perhaps too far. He felt the difficulty presented to him in the point of taxation without representation, and was driven to a position which ought at once to have inspired in him some doubt of his foundation. This position was, that the right of a colonist to be represented, must be held to lie dormant when he leaves the mother country, and to revive again upon his return,—that to him, while absent, it was unavoidably lost, and that compensation must be looked for in the advantages he derives in his new condition from the protection of her power. The reply of the House of Representatives is here conclusive,—that a right positively secured to the colonists by charter will be singularly valuable to them, if they must cease to be Colonists in order to enjoy it. It does appear somewhat absurd to suppose that the original settlers, coming with intentions and objects like theirs, should stickle so much to retain a privilege, the enjoyment of which by them or their posterity must pre-suppose the frustration of all those intentions. If they really proposed to remain here, of what value could such a privilege possibly be? Indeed, the whole argument, resting

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upon the necessity of the case, and making representation impracticable in Parliament, seems naturally to have a tendency directly the reverse of that supposed by our author. It forms the basis of Independence. If the circumstances of the case are such, that men, understanding their own interests, and capable of exercising the rights which belong to them, are yet by position debarred from consulting those interests and using those rights, it follows that that position is unnatural, and ought if practicable to be changed. The plain question may be stated in the following manner. Were the Americans entitled to exercise rights established by the laws of society, confirmed to them by the common law of England, and expressly stipulated for in a charter from the King? Did they stand in a position enabling them fairly to claim the exercise of such rights? Did they in truth make the claim? The affirmative establishes the justice of resistance against the aggressions of the British Ministry in Parliament, and the pertinacity of these in maintaining the negative fixes the basis of Independence.

That our author gained no laurels from this contest, is very certain. He admits that in England, and by the Ministry, his attempt was regarded as injudicious,—and endeavors to console himself with the approbation of Lord Thurlow; a compliment from whom is inserted in a note, composed with evident marks of satisfaction with and reliance upon it. The fact shows, what we have already remarked as characteristic of the man, a disposition to rely upon authority rather than intrinsic weight of reasoning. That Lord Thurlow, with the whole body of his party in England, should condemn the patriotic side of this question, is merely in character, and proves nothing beyond their consistency in politics. The Americans too could call up, in their turn, names like those of Chatham and of Burke, names of far higher power over the feelings of posterity. But the question is not settled by so doing. Great men are after all but men,—and as such, liable in the formation of opinion to the influence of a thousand considerations collateral to the point in dispute, and perhaps growing out of the immediate circumstances by which it is brought forward. The profound Bacon long since observed, that the human understanding is like an unequal mirror to the rays of light, which, mixing its own nature with the nature of things, distorts and perverts them. While this is true, and true it must be while man remains what he is, the judgment of posterity upon

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controversies important to it, can never be properly drawn but from the genuine strength of the arguments presented. As Lord Thurlow condescended to sanction those of the author, without adding any new ones of his own, we must be permitted to pass him by, and think exactly as we did before. The Americans engaged in the controversy were not his inferiors in ability, and they had motives of action seldom even dreamed of by that nobleman. Lord Thurlow raised himself to the exalted position he occupied in life, mainly by his own exertions, and we are not disposed to qualify the praise such energy deserves; but he never placed himself in any position, where the support of a few principles of public justice at once put to hazard his life, his liberty, and every thing commonly deemed valuable in the world.

This naturally leads us to the opinions expressed by our author of his leading antagonists,—Otis, Thacher, the Adamses, Hawley, Bowdoin and Hancock. He has drawn characters of several, which the editor tells us were left with the option to insert or omit them. At this day, we can neither regret nor feel indignant at them. The car of victory, which rolled over the body of the author, has borne up those men in triumph. They have received from their country and posterity a reward of which no effort by their ancient enemy can deprive them. The instance may, nevertheless, be used as no unprofitable example of the vanity of all similar attacks. According to Hutchinson, every one of the above personages had a private motive for his conduct,—so small that, when assigned, its inadequacy to the effect produced is not the least curious portion of the attack.

In all political matters, the motives of the principal actors will form a great subject of inquiry. Human nature is so constituted, that the distinctions between right and wrong, virtue and vice, are differently viewed by different individuals, and, according to the irregular movements of the passions, at different times by the same individuals. As a consequence, mixed motives may in the best of men impel particular courses of conduct, and the same motives will not at all times operate equally. Perfect consistency is so little in keeping with man's natural disposition, that the attributing to any individual the same motives for all his conduct, argues inaccuracy of judgment in the person pronouncing, or a narrow and artificial character in the person pronounced upon. On



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the other hand, there is a general uniformity in the character of the greater number, which renders the supposition of certain leading motives of action, probable, and of others improbable. Yet in every single case there is room to reason and to doubt. The general result is, that in the excited world of controversial politics, an immense field is opened for the construction of motives, and that the imputation of infamous ones becomes the commonest and most paltry expedient of party malignity. If we for a moment recollect, that from George Washington downward, scarcely a single great man of the Revolution escaped charges of every sort of dishonesty, the *prima facie* weight to be attached to them may readily be estimated. That each or any of those men were absolutely free from human imperfection, will not be asserted by any reasonable being; but that their general character protects them completely from such accusations as were made, can as little be denied. When we call to mind what sacrifices they made in fortune or in the field, and more than all, what legacies they left as evidences of purity of purpose,—great, flourishing public Institutions claimed at the risk of existence, fought for at the cost of oceans of blood, and secured at last by the yet most difficult task of compromise and mutual concession, it is the absurdest of ideas to suppose, that we shall sit down and listen without contempt to the tale, that this man loved popular applause, that made patriotism compensate for pecuniary defalcation, a third took offence in a court of law, and a fourth because he was not made justice of the peace.

Governor Hutchinson ought not to have indulged himself in such charges, because he had most felt their injustice in his own case;—perhaps had not been altogether discreet in avoiding to give occasion for them. We believe his asseveration, 'that he never, in his public character, took any one step, in which he did not mean to serve the true interest of his countrymen, and to preserve to them every liberty consistent with it, or with their connexion with the kingdom.' His ambition, whatever it may have been, injured himself more than the community, to which in many respects it proved useful. His errors flowed from the nature of his character, combined with the circumstances in which he was placed. His mental vision could penetrate no farther, than to see Massachusetts forever dependent on Great Britain. He considered it better to temporize, and even sacrifice some rights, than risk all in maintaining them. Such

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are ever the doctrines of timid politicians. We will not condemn him too harshly for opinions often held very successfully in more peaceful times, but we can award him no praise. His was a case, in which discretion was not the better part of valor. The punishment appears to have been quite adequate to the offence. We will not strive to add to it, by retorting upon him what he attempted to do to others.

A single point must be made an exception to this rule, principally because of the effect it produced upon events. He allowed himself to make suggestions in private letters to England, calculated to draw upon him an awful responsibility. We cannot admire the judgment nor the moral sense, which could *secretly* dictate advice likely to bring upon his countrymen all the rigor of military despotism. The letters transmitted to this country, through Dr. Franklin, contain the following passage.

'I never think of the measures necessary for the peace and good order of the Colonies without pain; there must be an abridgment of what are called English liberties. I relieve myself by considering, that in a remove from the state of nature to the most perfect state of government, there must be a great restraint of natural liberty. I doubt, whether it is possible to project a system of government, in which a colony three thousand miles distant shall enjoy all the liberty of the parent state. I am certain I have never yet seen the projection.'

We have little disposition to justify the mode of obtaining, or the uses made of these letters. Much of the author's complaint upon this subject appears to us to be well founded. Neither generosity nor justice are obligations commonly attended to in political warfare. Yet after admitting every thing that may be said, the letter itself with its significant paragraph remains, in its naked deformity. Its secresy is not its worst feature. The tremendous responsibility incurred by him, then in office, from the recommendation, could only be justified by the perfect soundness of the reasoning upon which it was based. Does the paragraph quoted contain such reasoning? Or is the startling conclusion jumped at, over all the obstacles of natural right and common social justice? Would the most unrelenting military tyrant reason otherwise? Did the members of the Holy Alliance, or Nicholas in crushing his Polish subjects, reason otherwise? *They* always profess to 'be pained at the measures necessary for the peace and good order of their

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subjects;' *they* 'content themselves by considering, that in a remove from the state of nature to the most perfect (*i. e.* to their) state of government, there must be a great restraint of natural liberty.' The great point, the use of force against all the principles of right, being thus justified, it surely must remain indifferent to the People, what name is given to their government. It is in fact a despotism. Surely the author knew enough of the character of his countrymen, to be aware that an abridgment of what are called English Liberties was not to be effected, without much blood. If he did not, he was not fit to govern them. If he did, we can form no exalted opinion of his sensibility. Possibly he may have regarded the probable consequences as a parent does the punishment of a child. But wretched is that parent, who punishes his child for a reasonable request,—still more wretched is he, if his only excuse rest upon an abridgment of privileges, which nature and the voice of society have admitted to be just.

We have touched little upon the want of candor as well as of prudence, which the whole proceeding on the part of Governor Hutchinson evinced, because these form the lightest part of the censure he deserved. He might have foreseen the chances that would lead to his detection, and the personal consequences to ensue upon it. His influence vanished. The Legislature voted to request his removal; and he was shortly after glad to obtain a leave of absence. Events were rapidly tending to a rupture. The tea ships came only to prove to the Governor how totally his authority was at an end. The Chief Justice was impeached, the law ceased to be administered, the courts were shut up. At this moment, Hutchinson left the Province, and his history stops:—a moment of immense importance to America, as from it the first Congress of the States takes its date. The interest however becomes transferred to another scene, and the particular history of Massachusetts merges in that of the Union. Hutchinson was no longer in a condition to pursue his favorite occupations. The offer of a baronetcy and a pension was poor pay for the loss of old friends, and all the motives of action which made life valuable. He lingered a few years among a people, who did not feel as he felt, and whose general contempt for poor colonists was too great, to be lost in sympathy for the self-sacrifice of some single persons. He died not long after closing these pages,—saved the mortification of seeing his predictions

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of misfortune, that was to attend the Independence of the Colony, falsified. There is reason to believe that, had he lived, he would have returned to live as a private citizen among us, but the decree of Providence cut short his intentions.

The general conclusion which we draw from reading this work is, that as a partisan history it is valuable. The facts appear to be stated with the same accuracy that distinguished the author's preceding volumes, but the gloss put upon them must deprive it of the same sort of authority which those deserved. The history itself, in these later times, assumed a character calling for a different description of mind. It remains even now to be written, and must remain so until an intellect of great natural strength, combined with freedom from the prejudices of the times, and a habit of rigid analysis, shall evolve from the mass of our materials, the most instructive lesson of the world. 'Mark well!' says that 'old man eloquent' of Greece, 'for though the season of events be gone, that of instruction from them remains forever to the wise.' His words will apply now as forcibly, as when he was recalling to the memory of his countrymen the times of their energy and glory. If there be a portion of history susceptible of being constantly used to advantage, it is the period of the American Revolution. The spirit that animated the men of that time was, it is true, above the level of ordinary life, but it diffused itself in channels of practical experiment, the benefit of which we feel every day. It is for us to *preserve*, and not to create. Yet there is danger of our falling fast asleep in the lap of prosperity. There is greater danger, that the place of the true spirit may be assumed by another and a different one, which, impelling ambitious men to be doing, may under the most specious phrases substitute only a restless appetite for change in the room of a rational desire for good government. The prospect before us has some dark shades. Sectional jealousies have grown luxuriantly under the forcing process of hot-house patriotism,—and political quacks have not been without success in disseminating their poisons in the community.

Salvation is only to be found in holding on to the good we have gained,—and this effect must be aided by a clear knowledge of the ways by which it was gained. Our ancient patriots promised little, and performed much. They knew that to be agitated was not to be happy, and always felt sure of the value of their object, before they encountered evil to attain

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it. While our institutions are safe, we have little to do but to follow the path before us, but the occasion is fitting to prepare ourselves for the time when they may be in danger. The spirit may remain quiet, but it should not be lost. Let it be cherished in secret, by a thorough study of the principles of our fathers, and still more of the modes in which these were carried into such successful operation.

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Art. VII.—*Early Literature of Modern Europe.*

1. *Tableau Historique de la Littérature Française.* Par M. J. de Chenier. Paris. 1821.
2. *Historia de la Literatura Española escrita en aleman* por F. Bouterwek, *traducida al castellano y adicionada.* Par D. Jose Gomez de la Cortina y D. Nicolas Hugalde y Mollenido. Madrid. tom. 1. 1829.

Literature has been declared by a celebrated female writer to be an expression of the state of society: by which is meant, that its various forms are determined, in a great measure, by the political and social condition of the nations, in which they are exhibited. This remark is confirmed in most respects by the literary history of modern Europe, and is particularly verified by the fact of the subdivision of European literature into several distinct branches, corresponding with the political sections into which the common continent was cut up after the fall of the Roman Empire. As the continent of Europe, politically viewed, presents the appearance of a number of nations of kindred origin, and of manners substantially similar, but nevertheless marked by formal differences of considerable importance,—nominally independent, but really, though loosely combined together by their constant intercourse and the various moral ties and relations, that necessarily result from it,—so the literature of this part of the world, while it all springs from the common root of classical learning, has shot forth in the course of its development and progress several distinct and independent branches, whose forms are now so various, that each requires a separate course of study. The immediate cause of this division was the variety of languages, which

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naturally grew up in different parts of Europe, in consequence of their political separation, their little intercourse with each other, and the general rudeness of the period, during which these languages were formed. Other causes, of a less direct and powerful character, also operated in a greater or less degree in producing this effect; such as the difference that existed among these nations in regard to geographical situation,—political institutions,—economical pursuits,—and, ultimately, religious forms and principles. All these circumstances operate, to a certain extent, though indirectly, in encouraging or depressing the growth of learning, and in modifying the form which it assumes; while learning, in turn, exercises a strong reaction on the state of society.

The principles that regulate this connexion between the condition of literature and that of government, are among the most interesting subjects of general inquiry, and have not yet been settled in a satisfactory way. The question has been considered, but not exhausted by Madame de Stäel, in her work on the Influence of Literature. In fact, the highest and most general problem connected with it, viz: whether learning and the arts flourish better under liberal or despotic governments, does not seem to be viewed by the best judges as entirely free from doubt. While the splendid example of Greek refinement favors the opinion, that liberty is the proper nurse of genius and taste, as well as happiness and virtue, some other brilliant periods in the history of wit and learning coincide with the existence of absolute, and even military monarchies. It is not, however, our present object, to enter at large into this inquiry, nor to examine particularly the causes which have created this variation between the several branches of the modern literature of Europe. Each of these topics would furnish the matter of a separate and extensive treatise. It is our purpose, at present, to state very briefly the manner and succession in which these branches respectively shot from the parent stock.

I. From the period of the invasion of the Roman Empire by the barbarians up to about the time of the first crusade, there was no such thing, in any part of Europe, as a modern literature. The learning of the period, such as it was, was wholly in the hands of the monks and clergy, and was recorded and communicated exclusively in Latin. Greek was unknown; the vernacular languages were despised as barbarous

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by the clergy, and, in fact, can hardly be said to have then existed. These were gradually forming out of a slow and forced amalgamation between the original Celtic of the west of Europe,—the Latin of the Roman conquerors,—and the various Teutonic tongues of the last invaders; all dialects of kindred origin, and fitted of course to coälesce in the end,—as they have done,—into compact, and tolerably homogeneous tongues; but at that time wholly distinct, and mutually unintelligible. They were not then used for the ordinary despatch of important business. The laws were published, and the religious ceremonies conducted in Latin. The very few attempts at literary composition, made at this time, were mostly in the same language, which also continued for several centuries to be the most usual instrument of communication, verbal and written, among the learned. Hence arose very naturally, and even necessarily, the practice of making this language the basis of literary and professional education; which has been kept up by habit, like many other practices, long after the state of things that rendered it necessary ceased, and is often defended on account of some fantastic and imaginary advantages, which are supposed to result from it, but which had no connexion with its first introduction.

The earliest appearance of any thing like a regular modern language and literature, was exhibited in the south of France, and the neighboring parts of Spain and Italy, about the time of the crusades. The Provençal dialect promised at one time to obtain the ascendency through the whole south of Europe. It was cultivated with enthusiasm for two or three centuries, and produced many poets of high reputation in their day, and probably not inferior in genius to their modern successors. During the flourishing period of this school, polite literature was, in fact, a sort of passion among the higher orders of society, and was more in honor with them than it has perhaps ever been under any other circumstances. Noblemen, ladies of the first rank, kings and sovereign princes made it a matter of pride to profess and practise what they called the *gay science;* and carrying into their amusements the forms and terms to which they were accustomed in their more serious occupations, they instituted their courts of love,—enacted their codes of laws for the better regulation of courtship and matrimony,—and conducted the trials of the heart, like those of the person and property, by judicial process, before a jury impannelled and

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sworn in proper form. The lion-hearted Richard, King of England, was distinguished in his day as a minstrel. René, titular King of Jerusalem, and father of Margaret of Anjou, the celebrated wife of Henry the Sixth, was illustrious for his patronage of poetry, and for the care with which he superintended the proceedings of these tribunals of the tender passion. He appears to have been the Justinian of this strange code. The Floral games, which were instituted about this time at Toulouse, by Clemence d'Isaure, and have been held there ever since, formed a regular annual festival, somewhat analogous to the periodical religious celebrations of ancient Greece. A similar institution existed at Tolosa in Spain. Catalonia produced, even as lately as the thirteenth century, many Provençal bards of high celebrity, and this school of language and literature had even sent off colonies into the south of the Peninsula. There was therefore at that time reason to expect, that it would continue to be cultivated, until its productions should assume a finished and classical form.

This result, however, did not happen, although it is now somewhat difficult to assign the precise reason which prevented it. It is true, that the singular fooleries, to which we have alluded, and which form so prominent a feature in the literary pursuits of that day, argue but slightly in favor of the general intelligence of the period. The understanding of Europe seems to have been, as it were, in a childish state. But as all the great and wealthy encouraged literature with extraordinary zeal, it might naturally have been anticipated, that it would in time have ripened into something truly rich and valuable. Political circumstances probably turned the scale against the masters of the joyous knowledge. The northern provinces of Gaul gradually acquired the ascendency over those of the south, or *Langue d'oc*, and brought in with them their own *Langue d'oui*, which was afterwards matured into the modern French language.* Castile and Leon absorbed the kingdom of Aragon, and established their own magnificent dialect on the ruins of the Catalonian, while the more rapid progress of civilization in Italy led to the formation and early cultivation of a purer tongue, which prevented the Troubadours from pushing their conquests in that direc-

* *Oc* and *Oui* were the forms of affirmation, corresponding with *yes*, respectively used in the southern and northern provinces of France. They seem at one time to have been employed as distinctive names for the dialects of those provinces, and even, in the case of *Languedoc*, for the country itself.



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tion. Thus their territory was gradually encroached upon in one way or another, on all sides, until it was finally reduced to nothing. The Provençal dialect went out of use before it had attained a pure and settled shape, and before it had served as a vehicle of thought and passion to any one of those leading minds, which stamp durability upon the language they employ. The light-hearted race of Troubadours became extinct, without producing a single powerful writer, and of all the *lays* that once resounded so merrily through the sunny fields that are watered by the Rhone, the Garonne and the Ebro, and were echoed by the Alps and the Pyrenees, nothing now remains but the name. The courts of love were closed. Society assumed a more sober and business-like aspect, and men began to look with something like contempt on the songs and sports, which had given them before so much pleasure. Not long after came on the Reformation, and brought in its train a century and a half of mysterious metaphysics, and uninterrupted war. Science was now any thing but gay; and this unhappy generation, which seems to have been driven on by a sort of demoniacal frenzy to pour out torrents of tears and ink and blood, in quarrels about points which they did not even pretend to understand,—notwithstanding their imagined superiority,—must have looked, we should think, with some regret and envy upon the happier lot of their simple and joyous forefathers. In the mean time, the Provençal literature became entirely extinct, and is now only known as a branch of antiquarian study. Thus ended the first attempt at the formation of a cultivated language in modern Europe.

II. The next was made in Italy, with a success not less signal, than the failure of the former. The beautiful, or as Dante calls it, the illustrious vernacular dialect, which replaced the stern and simple majesty of the Latin, had been silently maturing, and, as early as the thirteenth century, while the Provençal poets were still lisping their childish and ephemeral lays, was seized upon and fixed by three manly minds, which appeared about the same time in the north of Italy. It is hardly necessary to add the names of Petrarch, Dante and Boccaccio; who may well be considered, especially the two former, as the great fathers of all modern literature. Petrarch and Dante were doubtless two of the loftiest and finest spirits, that ever descended upon this our visible diurnal sphere. They divided between them the empire of poetry; the disposition of Petrarch being particularly sensible to kind emo-

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tions, and the beautiful forms which naturally correspond with them, while Dante dwells, in preference, in the regions of sublimity, and loves to experience and excite the deeper feelings of fear and wonder.

The respective events of their lives may have had some effect in determining the tone that prevails in their writings. Petrarch, uniting with the highest intellectual endowments almost every accidental advantage, was an object of general respect and esteem, throughout the civilized world of his time. His undoubted mental superiority elevated him to a familiar intercourse with the highest social circles, and made him the associate of the nobles and sovereigns of the day; while the gracefulness and beauty of his person, and the elegance of his manners, rendered him a universal favorite in all the companies where his talents introduced him. He was doomed, it is true, to suffer the pangs of an unrequited passion,—if indeed his Laura were a real personage, which seems to be still doubtful,—and sorrows of this description are certainly entitled to their full share of compassion. But when we read the sweet though melancholy strains, with which he was accustomed to complain of the cruelty of his mistress, in the cool shades of his favorite retreat at Vaucluse, and see him coming out of these delightful gardens, to appear at Rome, and receive a laurel crown from the enthusiastic admiration of his countrymen, it is difficult to suppose that the trials of the heart, to which he was subjected, very much diminished his actual enjoyment of life. Dante, on the other hand,—naturally, perhaps, a darker spirit,—fell on evil times. His native city was distracted with parties, contending in bloody struggles to determine which of two foreign interests should obtain the ascendency. The private happiness of this great poet was sacrificed to these contentions. He was banished from Florence, and lived and died away from home. Thus his great work was matured in exile and misfortune. Hence it naturally assumed a severe and gloomy character. The vision of Beauty, which filled his soul, and which he has personified under the name of Beatrice, instead of inspiring him, like the Laura of his famous contemporary, with passionate emotions,—finds him in a thick and shady forest, and conducts him to the infernal regions, where he meets the greater part of his political enemies, condemned to various forms of eternal punishment. Having thus derived a sort of stern satisfaction from taking this poetical revenge upon the opposite party,—he pursues his imaginary course into the

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happier abodes of the other world, and consoles himself, in his present wretchedness, by dwelling in fancy on the joys of Paradise. In the midst of his distress, he appears, however, to derive a secret compensation from the consciousness of the beautiful language, in which he is able to express it. 'It was from Virgil,' he observes, 'that I learned the fine style that does me so much honor.' His sublimity relaxes at times into tenderness, but even love with him is mixed up with images of pain and horror, and we recoil from the vision of Francesca da Rimini, with almost as strong an instinct, as from the tower of Ugolino. Petrarch, on the other hand, never deviates into painful reflections, nor clouds his pictures with any other shades, than the delicate and tender distresses of his hopeless affection. And love, with him, is of so pure and etherial a cast,—so wholly clear of all mixture of sensual and corrupt ideas,—that it rises almost into moral sublimity, and seems like a sweet and gentle breathing of the spirit of harmony, that informs and moves the universe. The third member of this illustrious trio,—who can hardly, however, be placed upon a level with the others,—possessed a genius more akin to the gay and sportive humor of the Provençal poetry. The Tales in the Decameron, upon which his reputation is founded, are mostly of a comic cast; and the motives to mirth are not in every case as pure as the language in which they are described.

The Italian language has never departed from the standard fixed by these great authorities. Whenever any tendency to vary from its rules has been exhibited, there has always been found, soon after, some powerful genius, who has returned, by the native effort of kindred taste and talent, to these original wells of undefiled learning, and recommended them again to his countrymen. Thus we have seen, within our day, the great dramatic poet Alfieri, passing over the whole intermediate train of his predecessors in the art, and forming his style on the antique model of Dante. The perfect success of the attempt, and the great popularity of his tragedies among his countrymen, are strong proofs that the national taste in Italy is still uncorrupted, and as pure as ever. It is, in fact, a remarkable thing, that in Italy, poetry, instead of declining very rapidly,—as it did in Greece and Rome, and has done in some parts of modern Europe, almost immediately after it reached the point of classical perfection,—has been maintained for five or six centuries, and up to the present day, at the same

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height of excellence. Not long after the decease of the three great inventors whom we have just characterized, appeared the brilliant group that adorned the period of Leo the Tenth, and comprehended such names as Ariosto, Tasso, Machiavel, Michael-Angelo and Raphael. We mention them all together, because the same spirit, to which in one of its expressions we give the name of poetry, animates the equally delightful creations of the chisel and the canvass, so that the perfection of the latter proves its activity as much as that of the former. It has been evinced in like manner during the last and present century, by the charming strains of Paesiello, Cimarosa and Rossini, the various dramatic excellence of Alfieri, Metastasio and Goldoni, and finally the matchless offspring of the graceful genius of Canova. This continual display of first rate talent in poetry and art, through a long course of centuries, is the more remarkable, inasmuch as Italy has been regularly falling in political importance, comparative and positive, during the whole period. It seems to be the destiny of this favored, though in some respects unfortunate region, to rule, at all times, in one way or another, over the minds of men. But we may safely conclude that even the political condition of a country, which still produces such minds as Alfieri and Canova, and a people that is capable of justly estimating their value, is not wholly desperate.

The Italian school of literature, as it was the first in order, is also perhaps the first in value of all that have appeared in modern Europe. If indeed we consider the other fine arts as belonging to the same family with poetry, (which is really the case,) the question is no longer doubtful, since in architecture, sculpture, painting and music, Italy stands without a rival. In poetry the superiority is somewhat less certain, although it would be difficult to produce any other modern school, in which transcendent genius is so well allied to fine taste, or in which the products have been supplied in such astonishing abundance. It is only in those branches of polite literature, which border on the region of practical science, such as eloquence, history and moral philosophy, that England, France and Germany may with some show of reason pretend to dispute the palm. Even here, however, a host of great names would rise up at once to oppose the pretension. But whatever may be the other merits of the Italian school of art and learning, (which it is not our present object to examine in detail) it possesses, at any rate, the singular and undisputed glory of

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having preceded all the others,—furnished them with models and rules to work by, and encouraged them, by examples of brilliant success, to enter into similar pursuits.

III. We find, accordingly, that the next development of taste and talent took place in a part of Europe, where the influence of Italy might have been expected to be the greatest. At the same period, when the learning and art of Italy had reached their highest point of perfection, in the golden days of Leo the Tenth, Spain, which then comprehended the whole Peninsula, was flourishing in all her glory, as the leading power of the European Commonwealth. Her dominion extended over a great part of Italy, and the intercourse between the two countries was, of course, frequent and intimate. The finer spirits, who travelled from Spain into Italy, were naturally struck with admiration at the state in which they found the arts, and carried back with them some degree of knowledge and taste. In this way, the attention of their countrymen was directed to these pursuits; and to this circumstance we may probably attribute immediately the formation of the Spanish school of poetry and painting. It grew up with great rapidity, and declined as fast; but during the short period of its splendor, was one of the most vigorous, rich and original creations, in which the intellect of modern Europe has ever put forth its strength. Spain, at that time, held the reins of art and learning as well as policy and war, and while the kingdom of France was distracted by the intrigues of Philip, and almost subdued by his arms, the great Corneille and Molière were seeking at Madrid for the models which they first copied, and then improved upon, until they finally formed a new, and in some respects more perfect manner of their own, and thus laid the foundation for the literary school of their own country. At the same time, the kindred art of painting rose at once, as if by a sudden effort, in all parts of the Spanish dominions, to an astonishing degree of perfection. This circumstance is another strong indication of the quarter from which the genius of the country derived its inspiration. Three different schools, the Spanish, the Flemish, and the Dutch, sprung up almost simultaneously in the different parts of the vast empire of Charles V., and his immediate successors,—being, with that of Italy, the only ones of any merit that have ever appeared in Europe. The names of Murillo and Velasquez, of Rubens and Vandyck, of Rembrandt and Teniers, stand upon the

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same line with those of Raphael and Titian, and only differ from them as one star differs from another in glory. Such was the luxuriance with which genius poured forth his rich gifts in Castile and her dependent provinces, during the short period of their transitory greatness.

The Spanish school of literature was not only copious and brilliant, but, as was intimated above, in a very eminent degree original. Although roused into life by the inspiring example of Italy, it was far from presenting a simple imitation of Italian models. Its great development took place, in fact, in a department which was least cultivated by the Italians, and was indeed at that time almost wholly deficient among them,—we mean the drama. In this attractive branch of the art, the Spanish genius chiefly displayed itself, and could it have united with its wonderful power a somewhat higher perfection of taste, might have thrown into shade every other example of dramatic literature that the world has seen, excepting always the Greek masters, and the *unique* talent of Shakspeare. Besides several dramatic poets, who flourished at this time and place, and who fall but little below the standard of first-rate excellence, such as Tirso de Molina, Moreto, and others, the Spanish school then possessed, in Lope de Vega and Calderon, two of those rare spirits that seem to take a flight above all standards, and form, with some half a dozen others of the same kind, that have appeared within the memory of man, a little class of their own, distinct from all other classes. The prodigality, with which these illustrious masters poured out their productions, was still more astonishing than their excellence; but we now see, and must acknowledge with regret, that this circumstance greatly diminished their separate value. Tragedies and comedies, by scores and hundreds,—epics by the dozen, were easy labor to the boundless fertility of Lope, whose dramatic pieces alone are reckoned by thousands. The enthusiasm of his contemporaries, which was thus kept alive, and constantly fired anew by fresh efforts, all displaying the highest talent, though all in a greater or less degree imperfect, could hardly find terms to express itself, and finally consecrated his name as the appropriate designation for every thing rare and precious. We now see, with some degree of pain and regret, that although his genius was not perhaps overrated, the profusion of his works has injured their effect. In this, and some other later cases, expe-

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rience shows that no superiority of talent will compensate for the want of care and finish.—Out of the hundreds and thousands of Lope's pieces, it would be difficult to select a single one, sufficiently free from faults to be pronounced on the whole good. He says himself, that he knew very well what the rules of correct writing were, but that he was obliged to put his art of poetry under a dozen locks, and suit his wares to the taste of his purchasers. It may be feared, however, that a restless and insatiable thirst for new demonstrations of public favor, coöperated with this motive to create a habit of rapid and careless composition. The same remarks apply in the main to Calderon, who, with somewhat less both of prodigality and power, had enough of both to give his works a reputation and a real value, nearly similar to that of Lope. They have both acquired with justice a high and undisputed fame, and have both left behind them a vast body of poetry, which has served to subsequent authors as a mine of rich materials, but which is very little read or used by the public. The single tragedy of the Cid, borrowed by Corneille from one of the secondary Spanish authors, and wrought up by him into the form of a finished piece, may be said to have, in some sense, eclipsed the whole drama from which its materials were drawn. Thus in our own literature, the few small, but precious gems of poetry that fell from the pens of Gray, Collins and Goldsmith, occupy a larger space in the public mind, and constitute for all practical purposes a more important part of the national literature, than the whole mass of the voluminous but unfinished works of the earlier poets, including even Dryden.

Although the drama was the department in which the Spanish writers chiefly excelled, others were, however, by no means neglected. In epic poetry, besides the hasty and imperfect efforts of Lope, it brought forward in the Araucana a production of great power, and of a strong original cast. To this we may add the Lusiad of Camoëns, since the Portuguese literature is properly an appendage and constituent part of the same Peninsular school. The Spanish romances furnished the original type for the novels, which have multiplied so much of late years, and which may be viewed as forming the real modern epic; while the admirable genius of Cervantes produced the finest specimen of the mock heroic or comic epic poem, that the world has seen. In this inimitable work, genius appears, as it always ought to do, under the conduct of good taste and

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patient industry, and so much superior is the effect of a finished work to that of the crude and unwrought efforts of equal or superior talent, that Don Quixote has drawn upon itself and the author a greater share of the attention of the literary world, than the whole contemporary drama. Thus Montesquieu, in his brief review of Spanish literature, entirely overlooks the existence of the drama, and supposes that the language contains nothing but Don Quixote and the old romances. He observes, that 'the Spaniards have but one good book, the object of which is to shew the worthlessness of all the rest.' The success of the Lusiad affords in like manner a strong illustration of the superior value of finished productions. This single work has secured to its author, like that of Cervantes, a permanent literary glory, while the reputation of Lope and Calderon rests in a great measure on tradition, and will gradually sink into the mere shadow of a name. The great writers whom we have mentioned, although inspired by the literature of Italy, may be said to have imitated the success of the great writers of that country, rather than to have directly copied their works. Others, such as Garcilaso and Boscan, imitate more directly the taste and form of the poetry of Italy, and have left some beautiful specimens of the elegiac and amatory style. The departments of eloquence and moral philosophy are nearly vacant in the literature of the Peninsula.

After the short and brilliant period which we have now described, the Spanish school sunk at once,—still more rapidly than the political greatness of the country,—into a state of abasement from which it has never yet made an effort to recover. Genius, taste, industry, every thing liberal and valuable,—excepting perhaps, the natural dignity and uprightness of the Castilian character,—disappeared together, and the seat of learning was transferred, as it were, by an instantaneous movement, with that of power, from Madrid to Paris. It is rather difficult to account satisfactorily for this sudden revolution, as it is, in fact, for the rapid political decline of the Spanish monarchy. Ancient Greece was the favorite abode of art and literature for a long time after she had lost her national importance, and so it has been with modern Italy. In the absence of any other plausible reason, it has been usual to attribute the decay of learning in Spain to the influence of the Inquisition. But this solution of the problem is attended with difficulty, because the Inquisition was not only in existence, but



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was more active than it ever was before or since, precisely at the epoch of the greatest literary glory of the Peninsula. Lope de Vega was himself a familiar of the Holy Office, and lent his aid, on more than one occasion, at those infernal festivals which bore the name of *Acts of Religion.* We must, therefore, probably look for the cause of the intellectual and political decline of this powerful empire, in other circumstances of a less general character, the nature of which it is of course foreign to our present purpose to examine. A future, or at least very early revival of learning in Spain herself, is hardly perhaps to be expected; but we may venture to hope, that in the flourishing states which will naturally spring up in the ancient possessions of this kingdom in America, under their new political forms, the noble and expressive Castilian dialect may yet bring forth another harvest of fruits, even more mature and exquisite than the first wild though rich products of the parent stock.

IV. The seat of learning was transferred immediately, as we have already remarked, from Madrid to Paris, and at this epoch is properly fixed the commencement of the French school, to which we may advert on a future occasion. We propose to complete the present hasty outline of the rise of learning in the other parts of modern Europe, by a cursory notice of the circumstances attending it in England. There, as in Spain, learning received an impulse from the example of Italy, and began to flourish, in a remarkable manner, contemporaneously with the most brilliant epoch of the arts in the Peninsula.

The English and French languages were the last of all in assuming a precise and mature form. The Italian, the Spanish and the Portuguese had, as we have seen, reached very nearly the forms which they now wear, as early as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, while the French and English were yet wholly unsettled. Learning had been encouraged and protected in England by the Saxon Kings, especially Alfred, who was himself one of the first scholars of his time, and would doubtless have made rapid and regular advances from that period, had not its progress been interrupted by the Norman conquest, which not only crushed the spirit of the people, but introduced for two or three centuries a new and foreign language to the exclusion of the English. But the natural vigor of the mass absorbed and assimilated to itself this mixture of extraneous substance, and it was not long before

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the hardy, independent and original English spirit began to show itself in literature, as well as in politics. Our earliest poets, particularly Chaucer, though they failed in forming the language, and are now of course in a great measure obsolete and unread, are not inferior, for true poetical inspiration and an affluent facility of style, to the best of their successors. They looked to the great masters of Italy as models, but not with a servile eye. Some of Chaucer's Tales are imitated from those of Boccaccio, but the subjects are treated with a perfectly free and unshackled spirit. Chaucer felt that a good story belonged to him who knew how to tell it well, and he took his property, as Molière said of his own occasional recurrence to the works of his brother poets, wherever he found it. In the mean time, learning advanced, and the language was gradually formed, but the best writers still kept their eyes on Italy, and their taste was doubtless directed and much improved by this circumstance. We discern traces of the study of Italian literature in Spenser; and, at a later period, Milton, whose mind indeed embraced the whole world of thought, drank deeply at these pure and sweet fountains. Even Shakspeare, careless, as he was and had a right to be, of every thing foreign to the resources of his own unrivalled genius, appears nevertheless to have had some knowledge of Italian poetry.

It is properly with Spenser, that the English school of polite literature may be said to open. Few poets of any age or nation have excelled the author of the Fairy Queen, in vigor and richness of imagination, purity of taste, or felicity of language; and had he been a little happier in the choice of his subject, he might have held the same rank in the poetry of England, that was assumed by Dante and Petrarch in that of Italy. But as poetry is properly a representation or picture of the actions and passions of real life as it goes on before us, it can never produce much effect or become truly popular, unless its forms correspond with those of its subject. Hence the great popularity of the drama, which represents exactly the outward semblance as well as the spirit of the world, and thus holds a perfect mirror up to nature. In the Fairy Queen, on the contrary, the observations of the author upon actual life, (for to this, after all, the substance of poetry reduces itself) become unintelligible, and lose their effect in consequence of the precise circumstance, by which he probably intended to heighten it, of their being wrapped up in a cloud of allegory.

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Where there is one person forcibly struck by an abstract image of Hypocrisy or Avarice, hundreds and thousands burst with laughter at the grimaces of Tartuffe and Harpagon. We read with satisfaction a well-written statement of the effects of ambition or jealousy, and lay down the book with considerable emotion; but Othello and Macbeth fire the stage, and convulse the spectator with terror and pity, as if the images before him belonged to the circle of his own friends and family. Hence it is that, while Shakspeare and Scott fill the imaginations and the mouths of men, the work of Spenser,—a poet not inferior perhaps in genius to either,—is much praised, occasionally quoted and criticised, now and then taken from the shelf, and wholly unknown to the mass of the people.

In England, as in Spain, the great development of literary talent took place in the drama. The general characteristics of the two schools are nearly the same,---originality, richness and power, with a somewhat rude and imperfect taste. Such is the great merit of the Spanish school in its way, and the extraordinary talent of the principal writers belonging to it, that it would at first view be difficult to suppose that it could have been surpassed or even equalled; but it is nevertheless certain that the British drama, though distinguished in general by beauties of the same kind, and liable to nearly the same objections, has nevertheless reached a height of perfection, which places it far above that of Spain. For this superiority, it is principally indebted to the *unique* and unrivalled genius of Shakspeare. Every form of praise has been, for a century past, so completely exhausted upon this writer, that it is too late to attempt to add any thing either in commendation or illustration of the value of his works. Suffice it to say, that he seems to delight alike in all the great departments of his art, and carries them all to the same degree of perfection. He thus combines in his own person the various sorts of merit which, as we have seen above, are distributed among the three great masters of the Italian school,—and also among the illustrious trio, which stands at the head of French dramatic literature. As the powers requisite for excellence in the various branches of the art depend upon the same principle, viz. a keen sensibility, or in other words, an exquisitely fine constitution of the organs by which our intellectual part communicates with the world around us, the possession of them all by the same individual is not in itself extraordinary. It is rather a thing comformable

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to the order of nature. But the development of them all by the same person to any great extent, is found by experience to be very uncommon. Accident generally determines, pretty early in life, the direction of the intellectual faculties: habit soon confirms it, and after a time renders any change difficult, and finally impossible. But the genius of Shakspeare never consented to wear these common shackles. He expresses all the various emotions with equal power and freedom, and exhibits in all the same mastery over his subject, facility of style, and richness of fancy. One would hardly suppose it possible that the spirit, which raised the terrible storms of passion that distract the brain of Lear, could breathe with such melting sweetness the soft accents of pure and tender love through the lips of Juliet and Miranda, and then again burst forth with such a hearty good will in the horse-laugh of honest Jack Falstaff. Shakspeare ranges like a chartered libertine through all the domains of the understanding. He could hang up philosophy out of compliment to the charming Juliet, but when he chooses to enter the field of general observation, he puts the seven sages of Greece to the blush. It would be easy to select from his plays a body of practical ethics, superior not merely in power and beauty of expression, but in actual truth, to any treatise on the subject that has yet been produced. When he paints nature, his canvass is all alive, and when he chooses to exert his creative power, he introduces us to half a dozen imaginary worlds, each of which appears to be as real, and soon becomes as familiar to us as our own. To display a second-rate talent in several walks of art or science is nothing,—the worthless triumph of conscious mediocrity;—to excel in any one, is sufficient for the glory of any one man:—but to carry each and all at once to a greater perfection than any other person of any age or nation, is something apparently miraculous, and places the divine genius which was able to accomplish it, entirely *hors de pair*. Such, however, is the praise of Shakspeare. Nevertheless, he may justly be charged with occasional offences against good taste: and this seems to be an accidental result of the astonishing variety of his powers. His faults consist for the most part in bringing together in the same picture various figures, in themselves all good, but in their nature incongruous. The porter in Macbeth, for example, is a capital sketch, but he interrupts, unpleasantly, the solemn interest with which we follow out the wild and supernatural story of the play. It is impossible,

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however, for a real lover of poetry, to desire, that the works of Shakspeare,—whatever may be their faults,—had been any other than they are. The enthusiastic admiration of the German school of the present day has even sanctified his errors, and proved, satisfactorily, that they are all real beauties.

By the side of this miracle of genius, the other dramatists, his contemporaries, though possessing great merit, appear at a disadvantage. The wit and learning of Jonson,—the sweetness of Beaumont and Fletcher,—the power and richness of Massinger, Ford and Shirley, are eclipsed by the superior perfection of their matchless rival, in most of their as well as his peculiar qualities. They constitute, however, a noble *cortège* to his triumphal car. Their value was more highly appreciated by their contemporaries than it is now, for the age in which he lived, by a singular fatality, does not seem to have been fully aware of the transcendent excellence of the poet of Avon. Pepys, in his private memoirs, lately published, declares the plays of Ben Jonson to be the best he had seen, pronounces the Midsummer Night's Dream 'insipid and ridiculous,'—Othello a 'mean thing,' and Henry VIII. 'a simple piece of patch-work.' Such profane language as this, in the mouth of one of the best judges of the time, himself a poet and fond of the drama, may serve to console the admirers of Racine for the fall of *Phèdre*, and the complete failure of *Athalie*.

Such were the glories of the English school of poetry, in its best and brightest days, but they did not end here. The same period, which produced this brilliant constellation of dramatic poets, beheld the youth of one, whom a competent judge has declared to be 'not second' to the best of them, and who has tried his powers in a line of poetry which critics commonly regard as superior to the drama. It does not belong to us to correct the decision of Gray, upon the comparative excellence of Shakspeare and Milton, although his judgment may not, perhaps, agree with ours: nor does the cursory manner in which we are compelled to treat the subject permit us to enlarge upon the merits of the latter. We are free to confess, that with the highest admiration for the genius and character of Milton, we do not recognise in his poetry a talent of the same order with that of Shakspeare. His touch is free and bold,—that of Shakspeare airy and elastic. The coloring of Milton is rich and true,—that of Shakspeare fresh, bright and dewy. In Milton's creations, we feel the hand of a master;—in those of Shakspeare, we forget

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it. But why balance invidiously the respective merits of these illustrious men, each of them in his way original, and without a rival, and who, from the circumstances of their education, and the form of their productions, do not properly come into comparison? In fact, when Gray declares that Milton was not inferior to Shakspeare, he probably meant that they were both first-rate minds, moving in different spheres, and not susceptible of being weighed in the same balance. This is doubtless a correct view of the subject, but were we compelled to sacrifice the works of one or the other, we should consent, with comparatively little reluctance, to relinquish those of Milton.

The revival of eloquence and moral philosophy is another of the great merits of the English school of literature. Bacon and Jeremy Taylor stood at that lofty, and to most minds inaccessible height of intellectual eminence, where philosophy and poetry are seen to flow together from their common spring in the heart; and they combine the essential qualities of both. Locke took his departure from a somewhat different point. He made no account of feeling, and set but little value on what he considered the deceptive coloring of eloquence and poetry; but explored with singular clearness of view the field of intellect, which he thought worth attention. His philosophy, however, remained imperfect, and in order to produce its proper beneficial effects, required to be completed by some equally powerful mind. Instead of this, it was destined to become, in the hands of his foreign disciples, a code of immorality and falsehood, and in its practical results to unsettle, for a time the peace of Europe and the world.

Such was the brilliant state of the English school of learning and art, during the reigns of Elizabeth and James. Although the drama was discouraged in the following period of confusion and civil war, the spirit of poetry survived, and flourished in the person of Milton; and from the great display of talent, which took place after the accession of Charles, it is probable that the standard of taste would have risen still higher than it stood before, without any corresponding decline of genius, had the mind of the country continued to pursue its former independent and original course. But at this critical moment, it met the fate which befel the ruined archangel in his tedious flight through chaos, having been struck by a side-wind, whose 'tempestuous rebuff' drove it ten thousand fathoms

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wide of its former glorious path, and gave it, for at least a century, a new and false direction. This side-wind was no other than the influence of the French school of poetry, then at its highest point of splendor and perfection. Charles II. and the train of attendants who accompanied him on his return, had been educated in this school, and had no taste for any other. Their personal and political relations with France, kept up a strict and continual intercourse between the two courts: and that of Charles was in every respect fashioned on the model established by his illustrious contemporary. Language, manners, morals, taste, politics, religion,—every thing was French. Learning and art could not fail to be affected by this revolution; and Dryden, one of the most powerful, but not least pliant of the masters of English literature, was but too well fitted by his talent and character to set the new fashion. Milton, still alive and in the fullness of his power, was forgotten, and the Paradise Lost dropped still-born from the press. The true English drama was despised as barbarous, and nothing would answer but tragedies in rhyme, on the model of Corneille and Racine. It is painful to reflect, that 'Glorious John,' as Dryden has by courtesy been lately called, should have prostituted a first-rate talent to the sole purpose of supplying the vicious taste of the court with these miserable wares: and after forty years of constant literary labor, have left no monuments, excepting a few short occasional pieces, really worthy of his genius. Pope followed in the same taste, but with better success, and though writing in another language, is one of the principal ornaments of the French school of poetry. But this exotic style never took deep root or flourished much in the English soil, and after the time of Pope pretty soon decayed, and came to nothing. Meantime, the true native school had also ceased to be productive, and there intervened a temporary poverty of real poetical and literary talent, greater, perhaps, than had been known since the time of Chaucer. The general movement of intellect, that came on soon after throughout all Christendom, and the expansion of the political influence and national glory of England that followed, awoke the slumbering genius of the country, and within our day another native school of learning has sprung up with a most luxuriant display of original vigor, and, having taken in the main a right direction, promises to pursue a long and successful career on both sides of the Atlantic.

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Thus the brief review of English learning, into which we have now entered, brings us back to the French school, which we had already reached by the way of Madrid. It is not from any prejudice against the French style of poetry, that we have been led to represent its influence on the state of English learning as unfavorable. Pride, indeed, as well as principle, ought to induce us to do full justice to the merit of a foreign school, which possessed power enough to arrest the progress of the English mind, at one of its most active periods, and change its direction for a century. 'Great let me call him, for he conquered me.' We ought, for the honor of our fathers, to presume that the strange gods, which could draw them from their natural allegiance to Shakspeare and Milton, were not without some well-founded claims to real divinity; higher, perhaps, than the public of the present day is in general ready to admit. The character and real value of the principal writers of the French school may, probably, engage our attention in a future article.

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ART. VIII.—*Memoirs of Brissot.*

*Mémoires de Brissot, Membre de l' Assemblée Législative et de la Convention Nationale, sur ses Contemporains et la Revolution Française. Publiés par son Fils avec des Notes et des Eclaircissemens Historiques.* Par M. F. DE MONTROL. A Bruxelles. 3 vols. 12mo. 1830.

'BÉNISSONS L' AMÉRIQUE,' exclaimed Madame Roland, in 1788, while looking forward to the great events of the next year, with that virtuous hope, and those raised expectations, which were so miserably disappointed,—*attendons et voyons,—bénissons l' Amérique.** In whatever temper,—however lightly this emphatic expression may have been uttered, it comes full of meaning to our ear. It addresses us as the first successful propagators of those opinions, which, like leaven, are stirring the sluggish mass around us. It commands us to consider with lenity and compassion the errors and excesses of those, who are following our footsteps, under far less advanta-

* Lettre à M. Bosc, 1st Oct. 1788.



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geous circumstances. It bids us, from this observatory of freedom, to look out upon the troubled waters, on which the iron-bound oak of England, torn from its moorings, is swaying to and fro,—to hearken to the sound of strife, which reaches us across the Atlantic,—and reflect, that we are responsible for much of the evil, as well as much of the good which this contest is producing,—that our success has emboldened the patriots of every age and every nation; and that upon our moderation and our virtue it depends, whether, through every coming century, America shall be blessed as the first to establish and to teach rational liberty, or cursed as the propagator of false and impracticable dogmas, which have shaken the foundation of every civil and religious establishment.

In this country, there would be comparatively no difficulty in bringing the spirit of an impartial philosophy to bear upon the historical analysis of the events of the French Revolution, were they not intimately connected with some of the stormiest passages of our own annals. The great contest of opinion, which has not yet altogether ceased, renders it scarcely possible even to allude to the events of our constitutional history, without calling forth from their recesses those angry feelings, which are but slowly yielding to other and more recent causes of excitement.

We would hope, however, that the few remarks now to be made upon the character of one of the most prominent men of the French Revolution, will not furnish any such cause of offence. When his career closed, our internal contest can hardly be said to have begun; moreover, the ancient watch-words of party are gradually falling into disuse, and we are discovering, though not as rapidly as might be wished, the full force of perhaps the most generous sentiment which ever fell from the lips of a successful statesman in the first flush of victory:—'we are all Republicans, we are all Federalists.'*

The memoirs, of which the title is placed at the head of this paper, form one of the most recent additions to the long list of auto-biographies connected with the Revolution. The number of these productions, most of them written too at times of great danger, in prison or in lurking places, when blood was flowing like water, and the life of no man was safe for twenty-four hours, is strongly illustrative of that feature of the French

* Jefferson's Inaugural Address.

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character, which seizes upon and solaces itself with whatever the present holds out, neither disquieted by reminiscences, nor troubled by fears.

What value should we not attach to the complete memoirs of any one of the eminent men of our early history, written while the strife was going on, and giving vividly the private narratives belonging to it? It is surprising to find how little we know of what may be called the domestic history of the old Congress. The amplitude of the French materials, on the contrary, is as wonderful as our deficiency. Not to speak of the memoir writers of the time of Napoleon, they have accounts of their early revolutionary period, written by representatives of nearly all the different factions that stood opposed to each other. There are the memoirs of Ferrières and Bésenval, nobles,—of Mounier a royalist, of Bailly the constitutionalist, of Rabaut St. Etienne, Louvet, Barbaroux, and now of Brissot, Girondists,—lastly, of Camille Desmoulins the Dantonist. Most of these, with a host of others, have been published collectively within the last ten years, under the title of *Mémoires relatifs à la Révolution Française*, forming a series, without which, we need scarcely say, it is impossible rightly to understand that most interesting period to which they relate. No compendium can supply their place. Even Mignet's work, perhaps the most to be relied upon, is rendered insufficient by his Tacitus-like brevity, while the Epitome of Scott, destined we fear for some time to fill the place of one less partial, has most of the defects and few of the virtues of an abridgment. It is even more wanting in clearness than in fullness.*

If these memoirs, containing undoubtedly, amidst a mass of prejudices and contradictions, the most authentic materials of the history of that period, were better known, we should be more ready to admit that the deluded agents and sufferers in the Revolution were men, and had hearts and souls like ourselves,—that while error, too great and too fatal, spread its mists around nearly all of them, cold and calculating vice was confined to but a few.

* It seems almost like ingratitude in one of the present generation, which individually and collectively has received so much delight from the pen of this illustrious man, to cavil at any thing that comes from him; but is it captious or unfounded to say, that his mind was embosomed in the rich shades, and among the gorgeous pageants of an earlier age,—that it did not keep pace with the rapid changes of our day?

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We should also more easily detect the misrepresentations of that Tory and high-toned Whig Press of England, which has so long given laws to American literature. The adherents of both these parties, at present opposed to each other, but differing little in principle, and whom we shall before long see united in opposition to their common enemy, the Radicals, have hitherto cordially united in heaping every opprobrious epithet upon the agents in the French Revolution,* (with rare exceptions) from the *Constitutionnel* to the *Montagnard.* The select appellations which the Anti-Reformers of Britain divide between the Republicans of France and America, although pronounced false as regards ourselves, we have been sometimes credulous enough to apply to others; but this sort of colonial feeling, which has heretofore too much pervaded our *salons* and our cultivated circles, and which would make our opinions little else than an echo of error and intolerance, is fast giving way to the more healthy and national emotions, which throb in the breast of the great mass of the American people.

Let us not be misled by that press, which is at this moment the greatest obstacle to a right understanding between the liberal minds on both sides of the Atlantic, which is forever occupied in blowing into a flame the embers of hostility, that would otherwise have long since expired,—which in turn misrepresents our actual condition, and the feelings with which we are regarded in Europe,—which checks, by its false statements or its arrogant sneer, those sentiments of mutual respect and affection, that should subsist between us. Let us not, we say, be misled by this blinded press,—but when we see how much it is wanting with regard to us, adopt with distrust its views of European politics.

England, whether we regard her as a nation or as divided into the two great parties, Whig and Tory, was too vitally interested against the French Revolution to judge it fairly. Her wri-

* The events of the two last years have in a great measure falsified our remarks, so far as regards the Edinburgh Review and its kindred periodicals,—the brilliant success of the French revolutionists, and the feeble and dilatory progress of their own reformers, have taught them philosophy. But no one, who has traced the course of that Review for the last thirty years, so liberal and high-minded on every subject connected with its own island, can fail to have marked the misplaced arrogance with which it has treated the popular parties of the continent and of America.

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ters, almost uniformly, present us with one-sided views of the time; dwelling upon horrors which are undeniable, and omitting the causes which palliate or excuse those excesses.

We are constantly reminded of the crimes committed by the people, but we are not presented with the catalogue of the vices of their monarchs, not shorter nor less bloody. We are told of the tocsin which awoke the Parisian mob to pillage and slaughter, but we are not reminded that it was the same sound which, at a king's command, ushered in the day of St. Bartholomew. They do not omit to dwell upon the horrors of the *Noyades*, but the bloody *Dragonnades* are quite forgotten. We are told of enormous taxation, of the *maximum* and of the *requisition* of the French youth perishing on the frontiers; but we are not bidden to recollect treasures wasted, and a nation sent into mourning to gratify the ambition of Louis XIV.

The *Parc-aux-cerfs*, the scandalous vices of the whole reign of Louis XV., the outrageous luxury and oppression of the nobles, and the unheard-of misery of the *Tiers Etat*, are all put aside, that with a single eye we may contemplate the blood-thirstiness and cruelty of the people. It is idle to think of deducing the causes of the French Revolution, from the middle or even the beginning of the eighteenth century. We must go far, far up in their history, and trace down an almost uninterrupted series of oppression, extravagance, misgovernment on the one hand, and of misery, poverty, degradation on the other, from the first Bourbon to the fifth of May, 1789,* before we can fully appreciate the feelings of the people on that ever-to-be-remembered day.

Poets sing to us of the pride of blood; of the stirring emotions that flow from a long line of ancestry. Is it not to be supposed, that feelings of another and a deeper dye are also handed down from generation to generation? There is a chronicle kept in the heart, of the misery of fathers, of mothers, of ancestors, of their oppression and of their wrongs, as well as of chivalrous feats and knightly prowess.

It has been too much the fashion to look upon the French Revolution as a period placed apart,—a period, barred by its unintelligible horrors from all relation with previous and succeeding events; it was in truth most intimately connect-

* Meeting of the States General.

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ed with them, and was but the completion and last term of a long series of occurrences, that had been slowly tending to this end. It was a peculiar fulfilment of the declaration, that the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children, until the third and fourth generation. It presents the spectacle of a nation, sitting in severe and unpardoning judgment upon the heirs to the crimes of centuries. A king, whose incompetency as a monarch would have been cloaked in more peaceable times by his virtues as a man, perished on the scaffold for the vices of his ancestors. A nobility and clergy, not altogether unwilling to surrender the most galling of their privileges and the most oppressive of their institutions, were stripped of every immunity and every right, by a people, who saw in them only the depositaries of the pride, the arrogance, and the heartlessness of their forefathers.

The French Revolution, with its wild excesses and insatiate cruelty, is utterly incomprehensible, according to any view of human nature, if it be not regarded as a retribution,—fearful and wicked, forbidden by the laws of God and man,—but yet only a retribution, crowded into a brief space, of the wrongs of centuries.

It is to be remembered that the prominent men of the period were either of no education, moral or intellectual, or that they belonged to the class of *savans* and *littérateurs*, who, caressed and insulted by turns, felt perhaps more sensibly than any others, the difference of ranks; and that they were without the restraints of religion, which was almost to a man abandoned by the nation in its utmost need. There seems also to have been no one, sufficiently democratic in his opinions, and at the same time possessed of enough virtue and courage to command the respect and fear of the people. After Mirabeau, there appears to have been no one even capable of over-awing the multitude. 'France,' says Madame Roland, 'appears to have been, as it were, exhausted of men: it is really surprising, that so few have appeared in the progress of the Revolution. We have seen scarcely any thing but pigmies.'

With these prefatory remarks to bespeak the kind consideration of our readers for the subject of the following pages, we approach the auto-biography of Brissot. Brissot, as is well known, was one of the most prominent men of that party sometimes called *Girondins*, sometimes after himself *Brissotins*, which for a moment held the reins of the State, but was shortly

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afterwards swallowed up by that Revolution, which, to use the simile of Vergniaud, like Saturn, devoured its own children. Brissot possesses a peculiar claim to our favorable construction, from the interest which, at an early period, he took in our national fortunes; and he may indeed be regarded as a favorable specimen of the early republican character of France. The memoirs, now under review, purport to have been written at the Abbaye during Brissot's imprisonment there, from May to October, 1793; and, as they are guarantied by the names of his son, Anarcharsis Brissot, and of M. Montrol, the author of a History of the Emigration, we know of no reason to doubt their authenticity. The first part, coming down to the year 1787, which alone has yet reached us, was published at Paris, in 1830, and re-printed at Brussels, in a more accessible form, in the course of the same year. The work is not written with any great perspicuity or regard to chronological accuracy; but we shall be able to extract from it, so far as it comes down, a brief outline of the most marked events of the author's career; below that period, the contemporary history of the time furnishes abundant materials for completing the narrative of his life.

Jean Pierre Brissot, the son of a *traiteur*, the thirteenth of sixteen children, was born at Chartres, in the district of *Béauce*, on the 14th of January, 1754. In so large a family, it was clearly desirable that each son should bear some distinguishing title, and Brissot took, according to the custom of his province, the name of the town where he had been nursed, *Ouarville*, which he afterwards anglicized into Warville, and by which appellation he was frequently known. He is, nevertheless, sometimes confounded with his brother, *Brissot Thivars*.

At the early age of eight or nine, at the College of Chartres, he appears to have been an assiduous scholar, but even then he was infected by the spirit of irreligion, which, like a pestilence, was spreading throughout every rank of France. His skepticism drew down the censure of the clergy, and the displeasure of his father. We can easily pardon the anger of one much more stern than he represents his parent, in reading the language in which he speaks of the progress of his mind on this subject.

The jests of a fellow student, Guillard (afterwards an opera

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writer) ridiculed him out of the Catholic religion, and not very long after this period, he sits down at his leisure to prove the comparative advantages of belief and unbelief.

'I went to sleep a materialist, and awoke a deist; next day, I gave the palm to pyrrhonism. When my spirits were high, I was in love with atheism. Such was the state of doubt and error, in which several of my years were passed, until at length, enlightened by the writings of Rousseau, and having maturely weighed the testimony of my own consciousness, I came to the conviction of the existence of a God, and regulated my conduct accordingly. My pyrrhonism was never extended farther than revelation; I had always believed, that revealed religion was imposture. Entertaining these views, I did not hesitate to assail Christianity. Having accidentally encountered an English treatise upon the subject of St. Paul, I wrote another in reply.

This work appeared at Hamburg in 1782. In justice, however, it should be recorded that it is the only irreligious production which fell from his pen. 'Human happiness,' he says, 'flows from a reciprocal toleration of opinions, and I cannot condemn too severely this early trifling, fit only to create irritation, and to cause hatred and strife.'*

At an early age, that restlessness, that discontent, that longing after immortality, which, with those destined to take a prominent share in active life, so often render even youth little different from an unquiet dream, appear to have seized upon Brissot. He thus commemorates some of the feelings of his boyhood.

'The professor had divined the ambitious views by which I was tortured; I was wholly absorbed by the passion for renown; a theatre of action alone was wanting. The idea of revolution often entered my mind, though I dared not yet disclose it; and I naturally assigned to myself one of the most important parts in the drama. I had been very deeply impressed by the history of Charles the First and Cromwell. I will, nevertheless, avow, and the declaration will not find favor with those who convert patriotism into a species of cannibalism, that I never, in my romantic dreams, imitated the barbarous example of murdering my captive; I only sent him into exile.'

* Tom. I. p. 112.

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The earlier stages of his education being passed through, Brissot eagerly grasped at the opportunity offered him of becoming independent of his parents, whom he had offended, and entered himself as a clerk, with one Nolleau, *procureur du Parlement* at Paris, from whom he received a salary of four hundred livres per annum; in this office, he was so singularly happy as to have Robespierre for a fellow student.

He seems, by his own statement, to have partaken very lightly of the dissipation of the continental metropolis, and to have devoted himself to literary pursuits almost from the moment of his entering Paris. While yet a clerk in Nolleau's office, he attracted the attention of Linguet, at that time a *littérateur* of considerable notoriety, and was allowed to contribute to his *Journal de Politique et de Littérature*. Linguet, however, soon became embroiled with La Harpe, editor of the *Mercure*, who was supported by Suard, and a majority of the academicians; he lost the favor of the young queen, who at first befriended him, and as the periodical press depended at that time wholly upon the favor of the government, Linguet was obliged to abandon his paper to his antagonists, and take refuge first in Holland, and afterwards in England.

Nolleau died, and Brissot continued his studies with a brother-in-law of the deceased attorney. This person, probably discerning the turn of his clerk's mind, advised him to abandon his chosen profession, either for the bar, (as counsel) or literature. This advice was sufficiently palatable to Brissot, already disgusted with the systematic drudgery of his vocation, and he acknowledged his compliance with it, by publishing almost immediately a pamphlet entitled *Sur l'Indépendance de l'Avocat*. This was followed up soon after, in 1766—7, by a satire, entitled *Pot Pourri*. This latter procured him the honor of a *lettre-de-cachet*, the consequences of which he avoided by a timely flight to his native town.

After a short interval, we again find him in Paris, without friends and without resources. Of this period of his life, he thus speaks:

'Poverty was not my severest trial: I was compelled to borrow, and in order to induce my friends to lend, to deceive them in relation to my prospects. This humiliating necessity rent my very soul. How often did I regret, that I was unacquainted with any mechanical occupation, by which, still retaining the



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knowledge I had already acquired, I might become independent! There is no period of my life, on which I look back with greater sorrow. I found in it nothing but misery concealed beneath the show of pleasure, dangerous connexions, and degrading expedients, like that I have already mentioned, and which I then regarded as almost pardonable. I thank Heaven for preserving me from those greater faults and vices, into which distress has power sometimes to hurry us. I still shudder at the recollection.

Brissot appears to have espoused the cause of the revolted American Colonies at an early period, and before the French Court had determined upon their policy, he wrote a satire upon Lord North, entitled *Testament Politique de l'Angleterre.* Vergennes forbade its appearance, but it was published in Switzerland, 'grâce aux presses de Neufchâtel, qui se chargeaient alors d'eclairer la France malgré les ministres.' *

An Englishman named Swinton, together with Deserre Delatour, a Frenchman, were at this time engaged in publishing at London a French newspaper, called the *Courrier de l'Europe,* which was one of the earliest of the periodicals, that are now like levers strained to upturn the gothic thrones of the continent. The information that Brissot gives us, with regard to this Gazette, may not be unacceptable. Before the publication of the Courrier, says he, England was literally *terra incognita* to the rest of Europe. Nothing was known of her internal transactions. The only knowledge they had of her constitution was derived from Montesquieu, or from the superficial accounts of a few travellers, hired by the Parisian booksellers to spend a fortnight in London, and bring back their budget of frivolity. An acute Frenchman perceived that the necessity under which the continental governments found themselves of accurately understanding the domestic details of English affairs, was a sure foundation for a successful periodical. He resolved to establish it. The French authorities readily comprehended how valuable such a gazette would be to them, in the violent contests then on the eve of breaking out.

The war had already commenced, when the Anglo-French newspaper was begun. It was eagerly read, from Paris to St.

* Page 245.

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Petersburg. Its list of subscribers was filled from every kingdom of Europe. It acquainted the continent for the first time with Fox and Burke, whose speeches were republished and extolled. All admired the eloquence of these orators, and all were equally astonished that the Guelph should submit to be thus bearded at the foot of his throne. 'What!' exclaimed the readers, 'no *lettres-de-cachet*? No Bastille? The people must indeed be kings across the channel.'

Brissot's *Testament Politique* fell into the hands of the editor, Swinton, who was at this moment looking out for some assistant to superintend the distribution of the paper on the continent. Brissot eagerly accepted the trust, and for the purpose of more conveniently executing it, immediately established himself at Boulogne. The English ministry, harrassed by this spy upon its measures, but unable legally to stop its publication, not long after this succeeded in throwing some obstacles in the way of the transmission of the paper from London to the Continent. The editors then resolved to republish it at Boulogne, and Brissot took upon himself the charge of this department, under the *surveillance* of one Aubert, appointed censor by Vergennes. In the languid and impeded efforts of this feeble periodical, how little was there to foreshow that this same means,—the daily press,—would become the most energetic organ for the advancement of those opinions which, in spite of the open hostility of some, and the lukewarm friendship of others, are winning their always laborious and sometimes bloody way, beating back, broken and routed, the hosts of superstition, intolerance and oppression, and approaching every year nearer and nearer to their certain goal? They go abreast with advancing virtue and knowledge,—it is not to be desired that their progress should be more rapid than that of their natural and rightful companions.

The censorship soon became too rigid, and Brissot, disgusted with Swinton, whom he accuses of falsehood and villany, abandoned the paper and returned to Paris. With characteristic activity, we find him almost immediately, and for some time following, engaged in prosecuting various literary enterprises. While contributing to the *Dictionnaire Ecclésiastique de toute la France*, he wrote a work entitled, '*La Théorie des Lois Criminelles*,' published in 1781, and which afterwards led to the *Bibliothèque Philosophique des Lois Criminelles*, printed at Berlin, in 1782, and edited also by himself. His

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*Traité de la Verité*, which he esteemed his best production, was published at Neufchâtel in 1782.

These works, it is not our province to criticise. They bear the marks of a mind rather active than profound, and especially distinguished by an inquisitive, incredulous and somewhat arrogant disposition, which not unfrequently occasions the unhappiness of its possessor, but in the long run generally applies its own corrective, and ends by bringing good out of evil.

The following sketch of his opinions, or rather emotions, which belongs, we believe, to the year 1783, is characteristic.

'The overthrow of royalty, which was then believed to be so essential to the interests of France, was at this time the aim of all my writings, and of all my projects. I entertained an irreconcilable hatred for kings: I could not speak of them with the least composure. The very sight of Versailles made me shudder: I never entered the castle but once, and then with the utmost reluctance. I did so at the solicitation of my wife, and the bad humor into which I was thrown, and which I ascribed to another cause, was only the effect of the spectacle of royalty. In order to subvert despotism, I formed a scheme which I thought must be attended with success. To excite a general rebellion against arbitrary governments, the minds of men must be enlightened, not by voluminous and elaborate works, for these the people will not read, but by smaller productions, like those by which Voltaire labored to destroy superstition; by a journal, which might shed its light in every direction.'

This project, the conception of which gives us a good idea of the very great mental activity of Brissot, was no less than to establish a Lyceum for the universe, at the head-quarters of which, at stated periods, should assemble the *savans* of every country fortunate enough to have any *savans* to send, and of which the high priest should publish a journal, propagating, among other things, the great truths of liberty and equality.

Fired with the thought, Brissot once more bade adieu to Paris, apparently without regret, and made his way through the south of France to Geneva. This visit subsequently gave rise to his *Philadelphien à Genève*, published in 1783. After a short tour through Switzerland, made partly with the object of concerting arrangements for the reprinting and distribution of his proposed *Journal du Lycée*, he returned to Boulogne by the way of Paris, where he was married to Mademoiselle Felicité Dupont.

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'I returned with my mother-in-law to Boulogne. There I passed some weeks in the bosom of filial and fraternal love, in the midst of all the enjoyments of friendship. My marriage had given me three sisters, or rather, three friends, for in this family all hearts were united.'

Early in 1783, Brissot went to London, where he intended to establish his press, and as he could not immediately put it in operation, he once more attached himself to the Courrier de l' Europe. In the latter part of the next year, he quitted this paper to pursue the design of his Lyceum, which had languished sometime for want of funds, but was at length begun by the assistance of one Desforges d' Hurecourt. Never at a loss however for subjects whereupon to employ his pen, and with a most honorable desire to diffuse, as far as lay in his power, accurate and valuable knowledge, Brissot in the mean time published a *Correspondance Philosophique et Littéraire*, a *Tableau exact des Arts et des Sciences de l'Angleterre* and a *Tableau de l'Inde*, the two last works being particularly intended to enlighten his fellow-countrymen on the power and resources of England.

An embargo was unfortunately laid upon his industry by his printer, and he was thrown into prison for debt. The moment he was discharged, he flew to France, where an inhospitable reception awaited him. On suspicion of having a share in the authorship of some of the vile libels, such as the *Amours du Vizir de Vergennes*, *La Gazette Noire*, *Les Passetemps d' Antoinette*, with which the press then swarmed, he was arrested and thrown into the Bastille. He repelled the charge with indignation; vehemently asserting that his love of liberty had never led him into falsehood or indecency, and after an imprisonment of two months, the Minister, softened by the prayers of his wife and friends, or satisfied perhaps with the mortification and suffering thus inflicted upon an inveterate radical, loosened his chains, on the express condition, however, that the *Journal du Lycée* should be discontinued, and the whole scheme abandoned.

From this time (September, 1784) Brissot, poor, and perhaps disheartened by his repeated ill success, appears to have led a quiet and unobtrusive life, until the summer of 1787, when he accepted the somewhat heterogeneous title, which we will not attempt to translate, of *Lieutenant Général de la Chancellerie du Duc d' Orleans*. The labor of this office consisted, as he

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says, in an examination of the objects to which the prince might apply his immense fortune.

This flagitious and despicable individual, who had just arrived at his fortune by the death of his father, was at this moment the rallying point of the opposition to the King, and the Ministry, headed by the inefficient Brienne. Brissot entered fully into the views of his principal; and attacking the schemes of the government in several pamphlets, (among which we believe were the *Lettre d' un Citoyen à un frondeur sur les affaires présentes* and the *Moniteur*, a periodical circulated with great secrecy and circumspection, and attributed to the joint labors of Brissot, Condorcet, and Clavière,) he was offered the customary remedy for excessive freedom of opinion, a *lettre-de-cachet*. This he hastily rejected, and once more took refuge in England.

Here, unfortunately, just at the point where it grows most interesting, this first part of the memoir ends; below this period, it is however comparatively easy to detail the principal events of Brissot's life.

Before his leaving France, we find him among the most prominent in laying the foundation of the society of the *Amis des Noirs*, the first association of French philanthropists for that object, the comprehensive wisdom and benevolence of which we of this age, who are witnesses of the perilous position of our gallant brethren of the South, can best appreciate. When we take a view of the whole of Brissot's life, we must not forget to offset this constant devotion to a wise humanity against the errors and the madness of his subsequent course. When shall we learn to discriminate between the unfortunate and the vicious, the unwise and the wicked?

Brissot's sojourn in England appears to have been but short, and in June 1788, he sailed from Havre for Boston, to make the tour of the United States, the government and institutions of which, for several years previous, appear to have attracted much of his attention. 'The object of these Travels was not to study antiques or to search for unknown plants, but to study men who had just acquired their liberty,—my principal design was to examine the effects of liberty upon man, society and government.' These travels, which were published in France in 1791, and republished in English soon after, although highly complimentary to this country, never met with any great favor, we believe, on this side of the Atlantic. They were rather

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too radical, in their tone, for our fathers of that day and generation, and perhaps the unhappy fate of their author assisted to create a prejudice against them. This work, although sometimes superficial, shows nevertheless much observation, and is filled with that love of republican institutions and that humane desire for the intellectual advancement of his fellow beings, which so strongly characterised the author's mind.

Deep and accurate thinking never appears to have been an attribute of Brissot; active and indefatigable, he labored more than he reflected. He was essentially a *working-man*, but his virtuous efforts and his unwearied benevolence have not saved his name from being added to that long list of misguided persons, which proves so conclusively that neither industry nor humanity can avail any thing, if unassisted by a knowledge of our own nature, by that worldly wisdom which is the compass and the chart to the mariner through the shoals and breakers of this life, and last and greatest, by that wisdom which cometh from on high, and which alone can lead us to the safe haven of another world.

Late in the year 1788, or in one of the first months of 1789, hastened, as he says, by the approaching Revolution in France, he returned thither, and from this time dates his political career. He almost immediately commenced his *Patriote Français*, one of the most popular of those gazettes which, upon the first dawn of the revolutionary day, sprang into existence like the ephemera, which the sun warms into being. This paper he maintained until his arrest in 1793, at one period assisted by Girey Duprey, who shared his fate, but the greater part of the time without any aid whatever.

To the first meeting of the States General, *L'Assemblée Constituante*, Brissot was not deputed, but early in 1789 we find him a member of the Commune of Paris, a prominent agent of that municipal authority, so powerful to rouse, so impotent to allay the passions of the populace. In this capacity, he had the honor in July of receiving the keys of the Bastille.

During the two subsequent years, Brissot distinguished himself in this office, and more especially in the club of Jacobins, of which he was an early and active member. The celebrated petition, drawn up after the arrest of the King at Varennes, declaring Louis dethroned, and demanding a successor, which was to have been signed upon the Champ de Mars by the assembled people, is said to have been the production

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of Brissot, who was at this time *Président du Comité des Recherches de la Ville de Paris.* This, it may be remembered, was the day when La Fayette attacked and dispersed the organs of the turbulent faction, and when, for once during the struggle, the strong arm of the law exercised a legitimate sway.

The second national assembly, *La Législative*, met at Paris, in October 1791; Brissot was deputed to it; and was immediately appointed one of its Secretaries. It now became apparent that the contest, which had so long existed between the Constitutionalists and the Jacobins, must end in the overthrow of the former. Brissot had long been a member of the party called by the general appellation of Jacobin, which looked to an ulterior and more levelling change, but comprised within itself two factions, wholly disagreeing as to the nature of that change and the means by which it was to be effected. These two parties, as yet engaged with the common foe, had not leisure, or did not think it safe to defy each other.

The party of the Gironde, containing in its ranks great talent, but, as it proved, no very active courage or comprehensive wisdom, and bearing in its front the names of Condorcet, Brissot, Vergniaud, Louvet, Barbaroux, Petion, whom the royalist Ferrières calls '*une machine à ressort montée par Brissot*,' and many others of almost equal celebrity, were the first to profit by the defeat of the *Constitutionnels*, and when these were driven from the helm, the Girondists assumed the perilous post. It was then that the *boudoir* of Madame Roland became the council chamber, and that this extraordinary woman, to whom Sir Walter Scott should have forgiven an imperfect education and the defective manners of the age,* as she represents herself knitting or sewing at her little table, in the corner of the room, by turns listened to and influenced the decisions of the ministers.

From the moment of the formation of this party, Brissot was its principal leader in the assembly. The ultra-democracy of his opinions, his incessant activity, which brought him before the public in his *Patriote Français*, at the tribune, and in the Jacobin club, together with his accurate knowledge of the situation of the continental powers, all combined to give him great influence.

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* Vide the remarks in the Life of Napoleon on her Memoirs.
† Mignet, Vol. I. p. 218.

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His name will be found constantly recurring in the debates. In the fall of 1791, he was one of the most forward in denouncing and enforcing the severest penalties against the emigrants, and in the early part of July, 1792, when a question connected with the declaration of war was under discussion, Brissot thus spoke of the King.*

'The peril in which we are is of the most singular nature that can be imagined. *The country is in danger*, not because our troops are few, nor that they are wanting in courage,—not that our frontiers are unfortified or our resources exhausted. The country is in danger because its strength is paralyzed; and by whom is it paralyzed? By a single man,—by him whom the Constitution declares its head, and whom perfidious ministers have made our enemy. You are told to fear the Kings of Hungary and Prussia, but *I* tell you that the main strength of these monarchs is in Paris, and that it is at home we must conquer them. You are advised to arrest the refractory priests throughout the kingdom,—but *I* tell you to strike at the Court of the Tuileries, if you would reach all these priests with a single blow. You are advised to seize all seditious persons, all intriguers, all conspirators. But *I* tell you that they will all disappear if you strike at the Court of the Tuileries. This Cabinet is thecentre to which all their plots tend,—here all their schemes are concerted, hence they all issue. The nation is the tool of the Cabinet. This is the secret of our situation. Here is the source of the evil; here must the remedy be applied.'

With regard to this speech, it may be remarked that, according to Louvet, this question of declaring war against Austria gave rise to the first division between the *Cordeliers* and the *Jacobins purs*, or the *parti Robespierre* and the *parti Brissot*. The former, whom this inveterate partisan uniformly terms *Orleanists*, were opposed to the war, as it increased the influence of La Fayette, the greatest enemy of Orleans, while the latter were in favor of it, as the readiest and surest means of hastening the overthrow of the monarchy, and the formation of a Republic.

The party of the Brissotins were too scrupulous of means to resist such men as Danton, Robespierre and Marat; the 20th of June was followed by the frightful tenth of August, and the sceptre passed from the Girondists; after this they maintained a feeble struggle for existence only. In the train

* Mignet, Vol. I., p. 263.



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of measures which led to the bloody insurrection of the tenth of August, the party to which Brissot belonged appear to have taken a very irresolute and subordinate share. The memoirs of Barbaroux are very curious in showing with what insanity he planned the insurrection, blind enough not to foresee that the tocsin, which ushered in that morning, tolled the knell of himself and his friends, not less surely than that of Louis. Barbaroux, one of the most honorable and lamented sufferers of the Revolution, was, strange as it may appear, almost the only one of his party, who was active in promoting the rising of the tenth of August. Brissot and Gensonné, together with Louvet, according to the accounts of the latter, succeeded during the day in saving many of the brave Swiss from butchery.

The remarks of Mignet on the parties which followed each other so rapidly in the first years of the Revolution, are distinguished by their clearness and accuracy. The Constitutionalists trusted to the virtue and the courage of the upper and middling classes;—the factions of Danton, Marat, and Robespierre relied upon the passions and vices of the mob. The former yielded only after a severe and desperate contest; but the Girondists, not commanding the confidence of the middling classes and too scrupulous to call in the multitude to their aid, had no foundation whatever, and the event showed it.

The *Assemblée Legislative* was dissolved, and the Convention summoned to decide the fate of the king. Of this body, Brissot was a member from the department of Eure et Loire. It had hardly met, before the radical dissensions, existing between the Girondists and the faction of Danton and Robespierre, burst into open and violent invective. The punishment of Louis was the Shibboleth, and here Brissot was among the most prominent of those who supported the opinion that, though guilty of high treason and deserving of death, the monarch should have an appeal from the sentence of the Convention to the *primary assemblies* of the people. A majority of voices decided against the delay; and indeed it is difficult to understand, why a body elected with an express reference to this question should not have pronounced the final sentence, if indeed the Monarch were deserving of death and expediency did not demand the mitigation of the penalty.

But this vote was in accordance with the whole policy of the Girondists. Avoiding an absolute issue with their antagonists, they hoped apparently to conquer, after restoring the tone of

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public opinion, by their powerful oratory and their freedom from crime. Their hopes were vain. The execution of the king only rendered the debates of the Convention more violent, and hastened the fate of the minority. After four months, of which almost every day was marked by angry declamation, or brilliant eloquence, but during which the Brissotins, with the exception of Louvet and Barbaroux, appear to have made no one active effort to avert their impending fate, the multitude were called in to shorten the contest. The insurrection of the 31st of May was followed by that of the 1st of June, and on the subsequent day an order was issued for the arrest of the principal members of the obnoxious party.

Louvet speaks of a dinner given by him on the 1st of June, at which he assembled his leading friends and urged upon them the necessity of fleeing to the south of France and organizing an insurrection of the departments against the capital.* Brissot, with most of his associates, dissented from him, refused to fly, and even went so far as to return to the Convention on the following day. After the decree of arrest, however, Brissot made one effort to save his life, and endeavored to leave the kingdom in the disguise of a merchant of Neufchâtel. He was detected, and apprehended at Moulins on the 16th June. In the mean time a portion of the Girondists had been arrested, a part had fled to the south of France, where after wandering in the manner so touchingly described by Louvet, through their own country, without a resting-place for the soles of their feet, a price set upon their heads and the blood-hounds upon their traces, with but one or two exceptions, they cut short their miserable lives or fell into the hands of their enemies.

'Thus,' says Mignet, 'was overpowered the party of the Gironde, a party illustrious for its great talent and high courage, which did honor to the young republic by its hatred of crime, and its abhorrence of bloodshed and anarchy, its love of order, of justice, and of liberty,—it could only ennoble a certain defeat by a bold struggle and a dauntless death.'

But let us hear the confession of Brissot, when, in prison, and looking forward to the bloody end of a laborious and painful life, he thus passes sentence on his own career. 'In most of the external circumstances of my life, the sport of the whirlwind, I have been rather the slave of public prejudice than

* Memoires de Louvet, p. 91.

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the apostle of truth.' And this is the statesman, philosopher and politician, with whose name and opinions France at one time rang, who had hoped to be the political regenerator of his country. What could be hoped from a revolution, among the prime movers in which such a man was one of the most able and the most virtuous? How different such a self-condemnation as this, from the feelings with which our early patriots may be supposed to have looked back upon the struggle in which they had fought and conquered! How different the wild struggles, the headlong career, and the inglorious death of Brissot, from the dignified and resolute resistance, the impetuosity regulated in its most vehement efforts, the success, complete but not abused, of the men of 1776!

Brissot, with Vergniaud, Gensonné, Fonfrède and the other leading Girondists, were handed over to the revolutionary tribunal, and after a delay, the length of which is not perfectly explained, they met their fate with uncomplaining courage. On the 31st of October the unfortunate men, to the number of twenty-one, were conducted to the place of execution. With the stoicism of the time, they sang on the way the Marseillaise hymn, applying it to their situation.

'Allons, enfans de la patrie!
Le jour de gloire est arrivé.
Contre nous de la tyrannie
Le couteau sanglant est levé.

Brissot is said to have been dejected, the others maintained an unaltered front to the last. Valazé stabbed himself on hearing his sentence. Lasource said to the judges, 'I die at a moment when the people has lost its reason; you will perish the instant it shall recover it.'

No atonement was made to the memory of Brissot or his fellow-sufferers, until after the fall of Robespierre, when the Convention settled a pension upon his widow and children.

It is not difficult to catch the prominent characteristics of the individual, of whose life we have detailed the principal incidents. Correct and beloved in his private life, and indefatigable in his industry, Brissot proposed to himself, as the object of his labors, the instruction, the cultivation, the freedom of his fellow-beings. Had he belonged to a somewhat earlier period, his name would probably have been associated with those most efficacious in bringing about the Revolution, but he,

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unfortunately for his happiness and his reputation, was thrown upon a time when philosophers and students were as impotent as their own dusty tomes. Credulous, averse to violent measures, capable of endurance, but incapable of bloody opposition, Brissot was no match for the cruel and unhesitating antagonists with whom he chose to contend. Unwise and ignorant both of his own power and of the character of the people, he urged on a revolution which already required rather the curb than the spur, and atoned for his error by his death. Nor can we say that it was undeserved. Ignorance sometimes demands as severe a penalty as vice, and where the happiness and the safety of millions are concerned, the one is scarcely more excusable than the other. His private virtues, his active benevolence, and his hard fate, must not conceal from us the culpable blindness of his political career.

The excesses of the French Revolution made the march of free opinion for once retrograde, and it is to the madness of such men as Brissot, who did not themselves seek an empire of crime, and who might, by leaguing with the earliest patriots, have withstood those who did, that we are to ascribe much of the strife, the bloodshed, the oppression, the misgovernment of the last forty years. The history of this period has furnished with a standing argument the anti-reformers of every country; it has created in the minds of wise and good men a distrust of the virtue of the people, and all the glory and all the moderation of the 'Three Days' were needed to dim the remembrance of the massacres of September.

We will hope, that a brighter and a calmer day begins now to gild the horizon of France,—that she will now receive the rays of that sun which, reversing the phenomena of the natural world, first illumined this Western hemisphere,—that the same broad light will dissipate the shadow which overhangs the destinies of the island-empire, the home of our forefathers;—that when, before many generations have passed away, this sun shall have reached its noonday height, the citizens of these three great commonwealths shall lay aside their mutual jealousy, and every petty hostility, dignified by the name of national, and enter upon that peaceful career of rivalry and emulation, in which alone the success of the one does not imply the failure of the other; in which alone honor and advantage can be acquired by all.

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ART. IX.—*The Annuals.*

1. *The Token and Atlantic Souvenir, a Christmas and New Year's Present.* Edited by S. G. GOODRICH. Boston. 1834.
2. *The Religious Souvenir.* Philadelphia. 1834.

THESE beautiful volumes are highly creditable to the state of learning, as well as of the arts, in this country. If they fall below the British publications of the same description, in the luxury of their typographical execution, binding, and embellishments,—in all which particulars, however, they are worthy of high praise,—they are on the other hand decidedly superior to their foreign competitors in the more important department of literary merit. We have seen no British annual, that could be compared in this respect with the Tokens of this and the preceding years. The latter have, in fact, been enriched by contributions from many of the best writers in the United States. In the one now before us, there are articles avowedly from the pens of President Adams, Miss Sedgwick, Rev. Messrs. Dewey, Greenwood, and Pierpont, Mr. Thatcher, Mr. Cushing, and other persons of established reputation, as well as some anonymous writers, whose names, if known, would do no discredit to the above list. In attending carefully to the point of literary execution, the editors of our annuals may, perhaps, have been stimulated by the example of their brethren of Germany, where the similar publications are often replete with contributions of the greatest merit, some of which have taken their station in the literature of the country as standard works. It is well known, for example, that Schiller's History of the Thirty Years' War,—the best historical work in the German language,—made its first appearance in this form. We hope that the publishers of these works will continue to pay the same attention to the literary department, that they have heretofore done. It is quite desirable that volumes, which circulate so widely as these do, especially among the younger part of the community, should not only gratify the eye of taste by the beauty of their embellishments, but should be made the vehicle of good principles and valuable information.

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Of the annuals of this year, the Token is decidedly the first. The engravings are unequal, but some of them have very great merit, particularly those of Cheney, of which 'The Orphans' is the best. This is really a beautiful thing, and does the highest credit to the skill and taste of the young artist. The poetry of the volume is not as a whole equal to the prose, although it includes some very agreeable articles. Of the prose contributions, the 'Reminiscence of Federalism' and the 'Modern Job' are, perhaps, the most remarkable. The former is from the eloquent pen of Miss Sedgwick, and serves in some degree as a compensation for her long and much-regretted silence in the way of extended publications. The 'Diamond,' and two shorter tales with the same signature, though they bear some marks of hasty composition, exhibit the felicity of style and various information which distinguish the other productions of the fair author. The 'Convent of the Paular,'—probably by Professor Longfellow,—is a very striking sketch. The Reflections on the opening and on the close of the Year,—the former from the pen of Mr. Dewey, the latter by an anonymous writer,—may well be compared with the finest efforts of the kind in the language. There are also various other articles, which our limits do not permit us to notice particularly, but which are equal, perhaps superior, in merit to some of those which we have named.

As a specimen of the poetry, we extract the 'Plague in the Forest,' which, if not absolutely the best poem in the volume, is very agreeably versified, and is curious as the production of President Adams. It is well known, that this illustrious statesman has, through life, amused his leisure by occasional compositions in verse, some of which have found their way to the public eye, and exhibit, with the vigor of thought and warmth of expression that distinguish all his writings, a command of the forms of poetry, which was hardly to be expected from a mere *amateur*.

Time was, when round the lion's den,
A peopled city raised its head;
'Twas not inhabited by men,
But by four-footed beasts instead.
The lynx, the leopard and the bear,
The tiger and the wolf, were there;
The hoof-defended steed;

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The bull, prepared with horns to gore,
The cat with claws, the tusky boar,
And all the canine breed.

In social compact thus combined,
Together dwelt the beasts of prey;
Their murderous weapons all resigned,
And vowed each other not to slay.
Among them Reynard thrust his phiz;
Not hoof, nor horn, nor tusk was his,
For warfare all unfit;
He whispered to the royal dunce,
And gained a settlement at once;
His weapon was,—his wit.

One summer, by some fatal spell,
(Phœbus was peevish for some scoff,)
The plague upon that city fell,
And swept the beasts by thousands off.
The lion, as became his part,
Loved his own people from his heart,
And taking counsel sage,
His peerage summoned to advise
And offer up a sacrifice,
To soothe Apollo's rage.

Quoth lion, 'we are sinners all,
And even it must be confessed,
If among sheep I chance to fall,—
I, I am guilty as the rest.
To me the sight of lamb is curst,
It kindles in my throat a thirst,—
I struggle to refrain,—
Poor innocent! his blood so sweet!
His flesh so delicate to eat!
I find resistance vain.

'Now to be candid, I must own
The sheep are weak and I am strong,
But when we find ourselves alone,
The sheep have never done me wrong.
And, since I purpose to reveal
All my offences, nor conceal
One trespass from your view;
My appetite is made so keen,
That with the sheep the time has been
I took,—the shepherd too.

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'Then let us all our sins confess,
And whosesoe'er the blackest guilt,
To ease my people's deep distress,
Let *his* atoning blood be spilt.
My own confession now you hear,
Should none of deeper dye appear,
Your sentence freely give,
And if on me should fall the lot,
Make me the victim on the spot;
And let my people live.'

The council with applauses rung,
To hear the Codrus of the wood;
Though still some doubt suspended hung,
If he would make his promise good,—
Quoth Reynard,—'Since the world was made,
Was ever love like this displayed?
Let us like subjects true
Swear, as before your feet we fall,
Sooner than you should die for all,
We all will die for you.

'But please your majesty, I deem,
Submissive to your royal grace,
You hold in far too high esteem
That paltry, poltroon, sheepish race;
For oft, reflecting in the shade,
I ask myself why sheep were made
By all-creating power?
And howsoe'er I tax my mind,
This the sole reason I can find,
For lions to devour.

'And as for eating now and then,
As well the shepherd as the sheep,—
How can that braggart breed of men
Expect with you the peace to keep?
'Tis time their blustering boast to stem,
That all the world was made for them,
And prove creation's plan;
Teach them by evidence profuse
That man was made for lion's use,
Not lions made for man.'

And now the noble peers begin,
And, cheered with such examples bright,
Disclosing each his secret sin,



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Some midnight murder brought to light,
Reynard was counsel for them all,
No crime the assembly could appal,
But *he* could botch with paint:
Hark! as his honied accents roll,
Each tiger is a gentle soul:
Each blood-hound is a saint.

When each had told his tale in turn,
The long-eared beast of burden came
And meekly said, 'my bowels yearn
To make confession of my shame;
But I remember on a time
I passed, not thinking of a crime,
A haystack on my way:
His lure some tempting devil spread,
I stretched across the fence my head,
And cropped,—a lock of hay.'

'Oh, monster! villain!' Reynard cried,—
'No longer seek the victim, sire;
Nor why your subjects thus have died,
To expiate Apollo's ire.'
The council with one voice decreed;
All joined to execrate the deed,—
'What, steal another's grass!'
The blackest crime *their* lives could show,
Was washed as white as virgin snow;
The victim was,—The Ass.

As a specimen of the prose, we extract the conclusion of the 'Modern Job.' The hero of this little tale, Mr. Evelyn, like his ancient prototype, is suddenly reduced, by a 'concurrence of calamitous circumstances,' from affluence to a bare competency; upon which, however, he contrives to live, with his family, in a retired situation in the country, with some degree of comfort and even elegance. This excites first the astonishment, and then the envy of the gossips of Tattleborough where the scene is laid; who can in no other way account for Mr. Evelyn's incomprehensible resources, but by supposing him to have discovered the Philosopher's Stone. After suffering a good deal of uneasiness on the subject, the gossips finally conclude to consult Moll Pitcher, and obtain her advice as to the course they ought to pursue. The passage we extract, and which forms the conclusion of the tale, contains some

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account of this person, who, as many of our readers are aware, was a real character, together with the oracle she delivered to the Tattleborough gossips, including an explanation of the nature of the Philosopher's Stone.

'Moll Pitcher, or, as she is still called in the neighborhood where she resided, Molly Pitcher, was no ordinary woman. Her grandfather possessed the gift of divination; that is, the tough old Marblehead seaman (for such he was) could tell when it was going to storm, almost as sure as the almanac; and was too well acquainted with the roguish boys about town, not to give a pretty shrewd guess, when Captain Kingsbury's moses-boat was carried off, who was in the mischief. Old John Diamond, for that was his name, had also been a piece of a merry good-hearted wag in his youth; and the bare glimpse of a tidy petticoat always set his heart to thumping in his broad weather-beaten bosom. When the pretty girls came to get their fortunes told by old John Diamond, he was apt to be a long time puzzling about their plump little hands before he could make out the lines to his satisfaction; and never failed to give them the promise of having a handsome sweetheart. John's liberality on this point, and his known willingness at all times to take a commutation of his fee in a hearty smack, established his character as a soothsayer from Sandy Bay round to Pulling Point. After lying in abeyance one generation, the gift revived in his granddaughter Mary, the renowned Moll Pitcher. Mary Diamond in her youth was beautiful; she had a pair of eyes as bright as her name. She married, had one son, who was lost at sea, and soon after was left a widow and childless, and Mary's lonely heart drooped within her. She was intelligent beyond her station in life; shrewd, thoughtful, and romantic. She lived within the roar of the resounding sea; her haunts, in her lonely rambles, were among the caves of the ocean; and she loved at the cold grey dawn to climb the lofty rocks which overhung her humble cabin, and look down upon the village of Lynn, the heaving shore, and out upon the eternal waters. The busy and prosperous denizens of the world did not comprehend poor Molly's mood, which shaded off at last, perhaps, into heart-stricken melancholy. At times she certainly wandered. Her descent from John Diamond was not forgotten. She was poor; she was lonely; she was contemplative, and saw more of the movements of things than many gifted with more worldly wisdom. In short, poor Molly, by degrees, was made to be a fortune-teller, and a diviner, in spite of herself. For a long time she disclaimed the character, and denied herself to many who sought her. This was ascribed to churlishness, and a de-

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sire to extort more generous pay. The more she shunned resort, the more she was visited; till the poor creature at last was obliged to tell fortunes in self-defence. But it speaks volumes in Molly's favor, that she was never accused of being in league with evil spirits; nor were the disasters suffered by her neighbors, in field, or fold, laid at her door. In truth there was nothing terrific in her mode of divination or attendance. A faithful tabby cat was her only companion, and poor Molly saw all things (which she saw at all) in the bottom of her tea-cup. Her humble dwelling on the road to Salem was easily identified, by two enormous bones of a whale, which her opposite neighbor had set up as gate-posts. Many a respectable tradesman, farmer, and shipmaster, from the neighboring country, half-ashamed to be caught inquiring for Moll Pitcher, would express a curiosity, as he drove into town, to see the bones of the whale, which he understood were set up somewhere in these parts.

'Mr. Evelyn knew Molly well. His wife and he had often encountered her on her solitary rambles about the rocks. He had often bidden her to his house; but she never entered any habitation but her own. He gave her the freest range of his grounds and woods; conversed with her about her own affairs; entered into her feelings; and discovered, that when she was not bewildered, she was an uncommonly shrewd and observant person. In return, he opened himself freely to her, spoke of his pursuits, tastes, and intentions; and in this way obtained her confidence and friendship. Since his misfortunes, his new abode was at a greater distance from Molly's humble retreat; but he had nevertheless met her twice at the rocks, when he had been there on business, and had conversed with her unreservedly on the change of his circumstances, and his present situation. The calm and quiet philosophy of Mr. Evelyn struck the key-note in Molly's intellectual system. The harsh, money-making, selfish world irritated, perplexed and well-nigh crazed her; and she wept tears of joy, when she witnessed the elastic and unpretending cheerfulness with which James bore his troubles.

'"And the dear Lady," said she, the last time she had met Mr. Evelyn, "how does she bear the hard change? It's a cruel world for the poor soul to struggle through, without the thing they all love, yea worship, without the money."

'"Emily bears her change of circumstances," said James, "like an angel. She is the same kind, uncomplaining being, you knew her here; not a murmur or a sigh escapes her."

'"Too good for the world," said Molly, "too good for the world! They will tease and torment her. And now she is poor, should she become a lone and friendless creature like

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me, who knows but they will come and persecute her as they did me, and make her tell fortunes and find out stolen goods. If it were not for the hidden cool caves of a day, and the still kind moon at night, I should have gone crazy long ago. But on the top of the rock it is sweet to watch the glorious stars; and near by is the grave-yard; and there all is peace,—peace,—peace. Many is the good fortune I have told for others; but who will tell a good fortune for poor Molly?"

'"Were I what I lately was, Molly," said Mr. Evelyn, "you know, that if what the world calls good fortune would make you happy, you should not have cause to complain."

'"And do you, James Evelyn, do you, who valued so little the worthless dross, who have enjoyed it without pride, and parted from it without sorrow; do you think it is this for which poor Molly mourns? Alas! I would dig in the earth, but not for golden ore; and the lost ones that lie there, I may not bring them up. But in truth, I have been to the grave-yard, with my mattock, at midnight, and thought to try, but that was when I was not in my right mind. Could ye give me your calm contented mind, James Evelyn, the gold ye have lost would be to me as worthless as it was to you. But beneath the sod and beneath the sea, there lie Molly's treasures; and sometimes in the deep caverns, the waters speak so soft and low, I cannot but start as if it were that kind voice which was once music to poor Molly's ear. But farewell, James Evelyn! the goods of this world could not spoil you, and that shall enable you to bear its frowns. Farewell! poor Molly's good word is worth but little, but such as it is you will never want it."

'It was but a few days after this interview, that the gossips of Tattleborough, in considerable numbers, repaired, as a kind of deputation, to Moll Pitcher's cabin, to lay their troublous case before her. Many of them were her old customers. She had promised Miss Charity Harkwell a husband, years ago, which was one of the greatest stretches of conscience Molly ever committed, and shook her reputation, as a true prophet, in the opinion of most persons except the lady herself. She had given Colonel Fourthproof pretty strong hopes of commanding the brigade; and Thomas Twigmore, the school-master, had nearly worried her into the reversion of the ushership at the Littlefield Philosophical and Manual Labor Institute. But to do Molly justice, although, like the great Lord Chancellor Bacon, she took fees from all of them, she administered her favors with a pretty strict eye to merit. It required a smart thrifty lass to get any thing of a match out of Molly's tea-cup. She fobbed off the forward, impertinent sluts, that were continually pestering her, with

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ordinary fellows. She put several on rigid probation, and sentenced more than one to solitary blessedness for life.

'Molly saw the troop wending their way towards her cottage. She knew them all at a glance; and as her mind was pretty full of the recent trouble of her friends the Evelyns, who she knew had settled down in the midst of this precious neighborhood; and as she had heard all the tattle of the place from some of them who had of late been separately to consult her, she had a kind of foreboding that the visit now made had reference to the Evelyns. This was one of those shrewd guesses which persons of rapid apprehension occasionally make; which often come to nothing, and sometimes prove true. A few such lucky hits had originally gone far to establish Molly's character for divination. Moll framed her question with a very considerable latitude, to fit almost any state of the case; for of course she knew nothing of their precise errand.

'"And what are ye doing with the Evelyns, good people?" she said, "I know your thoughts."

'This struck the nail on the head; and terrified those whose fanaticism had not mastered their humanity. They stood abashed in the presence of one, who, they thought, read the ill nature of their hearts.

'Molly perceived that she had hit the mark; and sternly repeated the question, "and what are you doing with the Evelyns, Deacon Pitchpipe, Master Twigmore, and you, Nabby Broadfist; I hope, Nabby," she added in a half-whisper, to the damsel, "that ye mind your ways; the smart cocked hat and epaulette I spied for you in the tea-cup last Christmas, had almost vanished before the new year. But neighbors, gossips all, what are you doing with the Evelyns? I know your thoughts."

'With a great deal of hemming, and ha-ing, and appealing from one to the other, and stammering and confusion, the deacon, and school-master, and Colonel Fourthproof, made out to explain their visit. They stated the notorious loss of property which the Evelyns had met with; that nevertheless they appeared to live in comfort and want for nothing;—that Mrs. Evelyn had her piano, and Mr. Evelyn his hogsheads of wine; that they had books to read, and clothes to wear, and money to give, when it was asked; that Mr. Evelyn had been lately heard to say, that ten of his best ships had come in that morning; that he had boasted of riding in his coach and four, and finally declared that he had the *Philosopher's Stone*. These strange and uncomfortable doings had perplexed the good people of Tattleborough; they were an honest hard-working people, who paid their taxes: ("when you are sued," muttered Moll, "and not before, and that

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ye know, Squire Closefee, right well; for you spirit them up not to pay, and then you set the constable on 'em,") and were opposed to all popery, witchcraft, and black art; they took the Philosopher's Stone to be neither more nor less, than one of the works of the devil; and had come to ask Mrs. Pitcher's advice what they had better do. And saying this, by way of fitting the action to the word, Twigmore attempted to lay a silver dollar, (the fund which had been raised by the company to cross Molly's palm,) in her broad outstretched hand.

'Molly drew herself up, with unaffected native dignity, and turned her hand, with a repulsive gesture, away from Twigmore. As she gathered up her thoughts to reply, the long and confidential intercourse she had had with the Evelyns rushed upon her mind, and particularly their last interview. She remembered many instances of Emily's kindness to herself in winter and in sickness. The admirable conduct of both, in the reverse of their fortunes, (with which her conversation with Mr. Evelyn had made her well acquainted,) crowded upon her recollection. She was provoked at the senseless persecutions they encountered; vexation mingled with her tenderness; and as usually happens in such cases, she ran off in a somewhat extravagant and mock heroic strain, in which, as in the character of Hamlet, it was not easy to discriminate the method of madness, from the agitation of a shrewd but excited intellect. Looking sternly round upon the group, and stretching forth her hand in an oratorical manner, she commenced her address with an exordium, not precisely calculated, according to the precepts of Quinctilian, to conciliate the audience.

'"Louts, tipplers, and busy bodies,—I told ye I knew your thoughts, when I asked what ye would with the Evelyns. Go back to your place, vain tormenting people. What! do you wonder that they live in comfort? Do ye not know that the man is free from debt, and hath a quiet conscience; and that his wife is an angel of goodness? Ay, free from debt, farmer Shortswath, and well were it for you, if you would be the same. And when I tell you that his wife is a good-tempered soul, your husband will know what that means, Jane Peckstill. Ye tell me they live in comfort. Well, when he lost the fortune of a prince, (which he spent, ye skinflints, as nobly as an imperial monarch,) he saved a poor five hundred dollars a year; and less than half of that pays the board of himself and wife. Does the like sum pay your bill at the bar-room of the tavern? Answer that, Colonel Fourthproof, as you hope one day to be a brigadier; but I have turned and turned my tea-cup over and over again, and not an inch can I start you from your regiment, Colonel; and the

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wine he gives you to drink, (and there I blame him) he has it for you because it never wets his own lips. I do not wonder that passes your understanding, George Guzzlewell; and then she dresses tidy, does she, Nab Broadfist? I tell ye, malkin, ye might rig on a new changeable lustring every day in the month, and put Emily Evelyn into a single plain calico once a year, with a pretty sprig on a white ground, (and I see her neat little shape as plain as if she were here,) and ye'd always look like a slut as ye are, and she like a lady. And she has her piano, has she, Eunice Screechowl, that gape in the front gallery o' Sundays, till ye take the curl out of the minister's wig? I'll tell you how she has it. It's not her own, Eunice, for that went with the rest of her things; and they tell me that she took a leave of it, that would have melted the heart of your nether mill-stone, Sam Poorgrist, or your own, which is as hard; but she hires it in Boston, if you must know, and pays a few dollars a year for the use of it;—and the poor soul allows that it is a little extravagant, but her husband obliges her to keep it, and makes it up by saving in something else: because he says he cannot live without his wife's music. Do you think your husband, Eunice Screechowl, will say as much, if I ever let you have one? Thank your stars, I have picked you out an old quarter-gunner, that has been as deaf as a haddock since the war at Tripoli; but the last time I turned the tea-cup for ye, he had got a hearing trumpet in his ear. Unless he gives that up ye lose him. And you, Twigmore, you do not see where he gets his books? At the public library, you oaf; and what is the public library for? And do you suppose that James Evelyn is a thick-pated fellow like yourself, that must thumb, and thumb, and thumb till the leaf is worn into rags, and then not half understand it, Thomas Twigmore? And when his elegant books were brought to the hammer, did he not calmly say, 'I could have read but few of them, had they remained my own, and what I have leisure to read, I can borrow from the public library?' And his coach and four ye cannot comprehend. There, there it goes, louts, tipplers, gossips," pointing at the Salem stage that dashed by at the moment; "that's James Evelyn's coach and four, and my coach and four, and yours, Charity Harkwell, if ye choose to ride in it; and quite as creditable it would be to you, I can tell you, as your own old square-top chaise, and poor raw-boned spavined beast, to go limping along with ye. And his ships, did he talk of, James Evelyn's ships? Yes, well I remember, ships he had; and dreadful was the storm that sent one to the bottom. Could the bright and blessed moon have called off the roaring waves, she would have done so. We toiled all night, the moon and I, to save the noble vessel. I was

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at Pigeon Cove, when the storm came on, and that you remember, Richard Smugglejug. They heard my tramp at the dark midnight, like an earthquake, through Beverly and Danvers. But the bright moon that had raised the storm, could not lay it, and James Evelyn's ship went upon the Graves. But did he boast of his five good ships? Now look out upon the ocean, louts, tipplers, gossips, five, ten, twenty ships dancing over the tide, and gladsome to the heart of him that sees them. The owners are eaten with care; the owners mayhap are loaded with debt; the owners are worried to sell the cargo; but whosoever has a heart to rejoice in the prosperous works of his neighbor, and the wonders of Providence, he is the lord of what his eyes rest on. He has the comfort of all he sees, while others have the cares. The town is his, and the country is his. He enjoys the stately palace, whose fair proportions meet his eye; he enjoys the broad fields, which spread beneath his feet. They yield him all the pleasure which man can derive from them. He owns their beauty and their fertility; the proprietor owns but their trouble and weariness.

'And what is the *Philosopher's Stone*, Dr. Longleech? a thing, I trow, that's not over plenty among your ill-savored rubbish. What's the Philosopher's Stone, Thomas Twigmore? a thing ye'll not pound into your poor brats, for you have not got it yourself; and how shall they teach that have not learned, Thomas Twigmore? What's the Philosopher's Stone, Eunice Screech-owl? Your quarter gunner that you leave me no peace for (and a weary long time he tarries, I grant ye, and that's not the worst of it, 'twill be longer ere it's shorter,) he'll hardly bring you that from his foreign travel. I'll tell you, louts, tipplers, gossips, and you, busy bodies and trollops, it's *domestic peace*. It's a gentle temper; mark that, Alice Sourface! It's a clear conscience; hear ye that, Ichabod Prowlwood! It's temperance, Colonel Fourthproof. It's patience, Amanda Flashfire. It's brotherly love, you Job Pesterkin, that swore your own sister's child into the State's Prison, for passing a counterfeit bill on ye, and who made it ye know yourself as well as any body. It's these that make the plenty and the happiness of the Evelyns, and their Philosopher's Stone is a *contented mind*.'

The Religious Souvenir, though it makes less pretension on the score of mechanical and literary execution than the Token, is especially commendable for its excellent moral tone. It is also enriched by some very valuable contributions, particularly a tale by Mrs. Sigourney of Hartford, illustrating the fatal results of Intemperance.



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ART. X.—*Men and Manners in America.*

*Men and Manners in America.* By the author of CYRIL THORNTON, etc. 8vo. Philadelphia. 1833.

IN our last number, we noticed at some length the observations of the Rev. Isaac Fidler upon the state of society and literature in this country. Some of our contemporaries have expressed the opinion, that we gave to that work an importance disproportionate to its value. It should be recollected, however, that in order to convey to the public a correct notion of the spirit of the British press, in relation to the United States, the works most suitable for notice are precisely the best and the worst; on the one hand, those which, from the ability and information displayed in them, may really be thought to require refutation, and on the other, those in which the prejudices common to most British travellers are exhibited in their naked proportions, without any accidental advantages of style or general learning, and of course in the form most open to detection and exposure.

Mr. Fidler's work is a brilliant specimen of the latter class, and has a fair chance of retaining, through all succeeding ages, the distinction of being the most absurd book of travels that was ever written,—at least by a clergyman of 'more than ordinary acquirements.' The work before us belongs to the other category, and may, perhaps, be considered in respect of literary execution and general ability as the best British account of this country that has yet been published. The work of Captain Hall is the only one that can come in these respects into competition with it,—and the two are in fact so nearly alike, both in spirit and execution, that it would be hardly worth while to attempt to settle their comparative merits. The work before us is described in the title page as written by the author of Cyril Thornton, a novel which is also anonymous, but is known to be the production of a Mr. Hamilton of Edinburgh. This person is, we believe, an officer of the army, living in retirement upon half-pay, of what rank we are unable to say with certainty, the newspapers having complimented him successively with various titles, such as Colonel, Major, Captain, and Lieutenant, some one of which is probably the true one. His Cyril Thornton, though of no great value as a novel, ex-

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hibits a good deal of literary ability, and would justify us in expecting from its author a work of a pretty high order upon a subject like that of the one before us, to which we think his talent better adapted than for fictitious writing.

This expectation will not be entirely disappointed, nor yet very fully satisfied by the character of the present work. It is undoubtedly, as we have said, in point of literary execution, one of the best that have yet appeared upon the United States. The style is not deficient in strength or spirit, and evinces at times a remarkable power of description, as in the passages on the Falls of Niagara and the river Mississippi. On the other hand, it is far from being uniformly so pure and correct as might be wished,—is often unpardonably coarse, and is pervaded throughout by an affected pertness, and a silly air of pretension, which are offensive from the beginning, and finally become by repetition completely nauseous.

We shall have occasion, in making extracts for other purposes, to give some specimen of these defects in style: and will merely add here, that one of the most remarkable transgressions against the purity of the language occurs in the very passage, in which the learned author is taking the Americans to task for their manifold and flagrant offences in this particular. At the close of his chapter on Boston, he introduces a page or two of observations upon barbarisms in language with the following sentence. 'Even by the educated and respectable class, the commonest words are often so *transmogrified* as to be placed beyond the recognition of an Englishman.' *Transmogrified!!!* and this too from the pen of a purist, and in the very sentence in which he is condemning a supposed want of purity in the use of language by others. Truly has it been said, that Nemesis is always on the watch. After this auspicious commencement, our author runs over the usual enumeration of *clever*, *guess*, and the use of *progress* as a verb, and having denounced, in addition to these stock examples, two or three other supposed American barbarisms, all of which may be found recorded in the British provincial glossaries, and are more frequently used in the mother country than they are here, jumps at the following astounding conclusion; 'unless the present progress of change be arrested by an increase of taste and judgment in the more (*better*) educated classes, there can be no doubt that in another century the dialect of the Americans will become utterly unintelligible to an Englishman, and that

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the nation will be cut off from the advantages arising from their participation in British literature.'

Within the limited compass of our reading, we hardly recollect an example of a conclusion, that stands at so utterly hopeless a distance from its premises. Our readers, who have ears and nerves, will, we think, agree with us that the 'word of fear' which we have quoted above from our author's pages, and which, that we may have the full benefit of the invention, is repeated elsewhere, and followed out into the not less delightful derivative noun,—*transmogrification*,—constitutes of itself a grosser offence against the purity of the language,---we will not say than all the minor peccadillos which he has mustered up against us put together, because these really amount to nothing,—but than the sum total of all the errors of this kind that came under his observation, in tolerably good company, in the course of his travels from Boston to New Orleans.

So much for the mere matter of style, which, with the deductions we have mentioned, is in the main good. Of the spirit in which the work is written,---a far more important consideration,---we are compelled to speak in less favorable terms. As friends of the two countries, anxiously desiring, not merely the continuance of the present political good understanding, but the establishment of,—what has never yet existed,—a really kind and cordial feeling between them, we deeply regret that the ablest and best-written work upon this country which has yet appeared from the pen of a British traveller, is also the one which exhibits in the most inveterate and malignant form the common prejudices of the class. The causes that have led to this unfortunate result, it is of course not for us,—imperfectly acquainted as we are with the author's history,—to pretend to investigate. He seems himself to have anticipated the objection which we make to the temper of his book, and in a short apologetic preface, in the form of a dedication, attempts to parry it in the following manner.

'How far, in writing of the institutions of a foreign country, I may have been influenced by the prejudices natural to an Englishman, I presume not to determine. To the impartiality of a cosmopolite I make no pretension. No man can wholly cast off the trammels of habit and education, nor (*or*) escape from the bias of that multitude of minute and latent predilections, which insensibly affect the judgment of the wisest.

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'But apart from such necessary and acknowledged influences, I am aware of no prejudice, which could lead me to form a perverted estimate of the condition, moral or social, of the Americans. I visited their country with no antipathies to be overcome; and I doubt not you can bear testimony, that my political sentiments were not such, as to make it probable, that I would regard with an unfavorable eye the popular character of their government. In the United States I was received with kindness, and enjoyed an intercourse, at once gratifying and instructive with many individuals for whom I can never cease to cherish the warmest sentiments of esteem. I neither left England a visionary and discontented enthusiast, nor did I return to it a man of blighted prospects and disappointed hopes. In the business or ambitions of the world I had long ceased to have any share. I was bound to no party, and pledged to no opinions. I had visited many countries, and may, therefore, be permitted to claim the possession of such advantages as foreign travel can bestow.

'Under these circumstances, I leave it to the ingenuity of others to discover by what probable, what possible temptation I could be induced to write in a spirit of unjust depreciation of the manners, morals or institutions of a people, so intimately connected with England by the ties of interest and the affinities of common ancestry.'

That a spirit of unjust depreciation is the one that predominates in his work, is,—as we shall have occasion abundantly to show,—very certain. Why this is so, it is, we repeat, not for us to say, but the author has, we think, answered the question in a very satisfactory manner, in the passage immediately preceding the one just quoted.

'When I found the institutions and experience of the United States deliberately quoted in the Reformed Parliament, as affording safe precedents for British legislation, and learned that the drivellers who uttered such nonsense, instead of encountering merited derision, were listened to with patience and approbation by men as ignorant as themselves, I certainly did feel that another work on America was yet wanted, and at once determined to undertake a task, which inferior considerations would probably have induced me to decline.'

The amount of this is, that the object of the author, in writing his work, was to furnish his countrymen with a reply to the argument in favor of reform, deduced from the supposed successful operation of democratic principles in this country.

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After making this perfectly candid statement, it strikes us that he need not have been so much at a loss to imagine what temptation he could possibly have had to an unjust estimate of our institutions and character. That a person, writing with an avowed political purpose, will, to a certain extent, so color his representations, as may best fit them to effect this purpose, is not perhaps absolutely certain; but the case is undoubtedly a very common one,—so common, indeed, that no individual, however correct his general intentions may be, ought to hesitate a moment in admitting the possibility of its occurrence in his own person. Every impartial and discerning reader must perceive, on the slightest inspection of the work before us, that it did in fact occur in the present instance; that the disposition under which the author made his observations, and of course to a certain extent the character of their results, were determined by his political objects; and that his book, instead of being a real account of Men and Manners in America, as it purports to be, is in substance nothing more than a long *tirade* against *the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill.*

A considerable portion of the work is in the form of a direct commentary on the political institutions of the United States, and is of course entitled to all the consideration which the arguments alleged against them may fairly deserve. In another and a more extensive portion, the author aims less directly at his mark, and endeavors to prove that the Government is bad, by showing that the people are occasionally deficient in polish and elegance of manner. Now supposing this point to be made out, we cannot think that the conclusion drawn by the worthy traveller would necessarily follow. If it were admitted, for example, that the practice of chewing tobacco, with its natural concomitants, is too common among certain classes of the community, it would not be safe to draw from this fact the inference that the laws of the country are tyrannical, insufficient, or in any way objectionable, for the plain reason that the practice of chewing tobacco is not commanded by law, but is a mere matter of taste and habit.

Again: if the only proper and polite way of eating eggs be,—as our author supposes,—to convey the substance directly from the shell to the mouth, without the intervention of a wine-glass, a dish, or any other instrument except, perhaps, a spoon;—and on this point there are great authorities against

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him, for no less a personage than Baron Haussez, lately one of the ornaments of the French Court, and a *gastronome* of high distinction, considers it as great an abomination to eat eggs directly from the shell, as our author to do it in any other way, and makes it a matter of distinct reproach upon the English that they all adopt this practice:—but admitting that our author and those who with him and his countrymen eat from the shell are in the right, and that the Americans, the French, and other nations, who occasionally indulge themselves in an *omelette aux fines herbes*, a glass of mulled champagne or some preparation of the egg other than the *au naturel* are wrong,—and for ourselves we consider the whole controversy no more important than the quarrels of the Big and Little Endians in the empire of Lilliput,—still, however, if we were to grant all that our author can possibly desire in this particular, he could not with any fairness conclude that the Constitution of the United States is a bad form of Government, inasmuch as that instrument prescribes no rule whatever on the subject of eating eggs, but leaves the citizen entirely free to eat them from the shell,—a wine-glass,—in omelettes,—poached, or in any other way that he may think proper.

But without dwelling any longer on preliminary points, we proceed to notice more directly the results of this new tour of observation in the United States. In attempting to discharge this duty, we shall briefly indicate the track pursued by our author, and make some occasional commentaries on his personal adventures, and on his statements respecting the character of the people and the principles and operation of the political institutions of the country.

Our author embarked at Liverpool, on the 16th of October 1831, on board the packet ship New York, Captain Bennet, and after a pleasant and rapid passage, reached New York on the 17th of the following month. His account of an adventure, in itself of no great moment, that happened to him on the very day of his arrival, will serve, as well as almost any other passage in the book, to illustrate the spirit in which it is written.

It had been arranged, it seems, among the passengers in the New York, that they should dine together at Niblo's tavern on the day of their arrival; and at the hour fixed, our author set forth from his lodgings, to repair to the scene of action. Finding it necessary, as he proceeded, to inquire his way, he stepped for this purpose into a shop, and asked the person in

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attendance, if he could give him the direction he wanted. The latter replied that 'he could, and would do it with pleasure,' which he accordingly did. Our author then went his way rejoicing, and reached his tavern in time to partake of the best dinner which he ate in America. Such is the adventure,—one would suppose that it was scarcely of sufficient importance to occupy a place in the traveller's published observations and that, if it did, it would hardly afford occasion for any unfavorable conclusion as to the character of the people. Let us now see the shape which it assumes under the pen of Mr. Hamilton.

'Before quitting the ship, it had been arranged among a considerable number of the passengers, that we should dine together on the day of our arrival, as a proof of parting in kindness and good-fellowship. Niblo's tavern, the most celebrated eating-house at New York, was the scene chosen for this amicable celebration. Though a little tired with my walks of the morning, which the long previous confinement on board of ship had rendered more than usually fatiguing, I determined to explore my way on foot, and having procured the necessary directions at the hotel, again set forth. On my way an incident occurred, which I merely mention to show how easily travellers like myself, on their first arrival in a country, may be led into a misconception of the character of the people. Having proceeded some distance, I found it necessary to inquire my way, and accordingly entered a small grocer's shop. "Pray, Sir," I said, "can you point out to me the way to Niblo's tavern?"—The person thus addressed was rather a gruff-looking man, in a scratch wig, and for at least half a minute kept eying me from top to toe, without uttering a syllable. "Yes, Sir, I can," he at length replied, with a stare as broad as if he had taken me for the great Katterfelto. Considering this sort of treatment as the mere *ebullition of republican insolence*, I was in the act of turning on my heel, and quitting the shop, when the man added,—"and I shall have great pleasure in showing it to you." He then crossed the counter, and accompanying me to the middle of the street, pointed out the land marks by which I was to steer, and gave me the most minute directions for my guidance. I presume that his curiosity in the first instance was excited by something foreign in my appearance; and that having once satisfied himself that I was a stranger, he became on that account more than ordinarily anxious to oblige. This incident afforded me the first practical insight into the manners of the people, and was useful both as a precedent for future guidance, and as explaining the source of

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many of the errors of subsequent travellers. Had my impulse to quit the shop been executed with greater rapidity, I should certainly have considered the man as a *brutal barbarian*, and perhaps have drawn an unfair inference with regard to the manners and character of the lower orders of society in the United States.'

*Le vrai*, says the French proverb, *n'est pas toujours vraisemblable*. If such an incident as this were found in one of Molière's comedies, we should say that he had greatly overcharged his character. Our author steps into a grocer's shop to inquire his way; the grocer commences a very courteous answer of ten words, but before he has even time to finish it, the inquirer nearly rushes out of the shop in a transport of offended pride, because forsooth the proprietor thought fit to *look* rather intently at him. Our author doubtless thought, that when so great a personage made his *avatar* upon the shores of our continent, the natives, in coming into his august presence, would at the very least *knock head* in the Chinese fashion, if they did not actually grovel upon the ground before him, like the negro courtiers of Bornoo at the feet of their sultan. That a simple American grocer should not only fail in this, but should actually take the liberty of *looking* intently at a British captain,—or whatever his rank may be,—on half-pay, and he too the author of a rather popular novel, this to be sure was an *ebullition of republican insolence*, which, had not the matter been speedily set right, would unquestionably have stamped the offender as a *brutal barbarian*, and *justified the most unfavorable inferences with regard to the character and manners of the lower orders of society in the United States.*

'This incident,' says our author, 'afforded me the first practical insight into the manners of the people, and was useful as explaining the source of many of the errors of former travellers.' Our readers will probably think, with us, that his account of the incident affords a pretty good insight into his own character, and explains very satisfactorily the source of many of his subsequent errors. We may remark, *en passant*, that the peculiarity of our author's enunciation, which, from the loss of a part of his organs of speech in some of his youthful campaigns, is, we understand, hardly intelligible to a person unaccustomed to it, probably had its effect in calling forth the *look* that offended him so much, as well as the *something foreign in his appearance*, which, however,—if we are rightly informed,—was in fact, in point of costume, generally more than singular.



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Our author, on his arrival at New York, took lodgings at Bunker's Hotel, and the next morning assumed his place at the breakfast table with the other inmates of the house. The state of things at his entrance is described as follows:

'I had nearly completed my toilet on the morning after my arrival, when the tinkling of a large bell gave intimation that the hour of breakfast was come. I accordingly descended as speedily as possible to the *salle à manger*, and found a considerable party engaged in doing justice to a meal, which at first glance one would scarcely have guessed to be a breakfast. Solid viands of all descriptions loaded the table, while, in the occasional intervals, were distributed dishes of rolls, toast, and cakes of buck-wheat and Indian corn. At the head of the table sate the landlady, who, with an air of complacent dignity, was busied in the distribution of tea and coffee. A large bevy of negroes was bustling about, ministering with all possible alacrity to the many wants, which were somewhat vociferously obtruded on their attention. Towards the upper end of the table I observed about a dozen ladies, but by far the largest part of the company were of the other sex.'

All this must, to a hungry man, have formed on the whole a rather promising *ensemble*, and one would naturally suppose that our traveller,—who frequently compliments himself upon possessing the hearty and indiscriminating appetite of an old campaigner,—must have made a good breakfast. Most of the guests probably did so, and went their way without imagining that any thing extraordinary had happened. But to the refined sensibilities of our author, the affair was little more than a series of various abominations.

'The contrast of the whole scene with that of an English breakfast table was striking enough. Here was no loitering nor lounging; no dipping into newspapers; no apparent lassitude of appetite; no interval of repose in mastication; but all was hurry, bustle, clamor and voracity, and the business of repletion went forward with a rapidity altogether unexampled. The strenuous efforts of the company were, of course, soon rewarded with success. Departures, which had begun, even before I took my place at the table, became every instant more numerous, and in a few minutes the apartment had become what Moore beautifully describes in one of his songs, a "banquet-hall deserted." The appearance of the table, under such circumstances, was by no means gracious either to the eye or the fancy. It was strewed thickly with the *disjecta membra* of the enter-

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tainment. Here lay fragments of fish, somewhat unpleasantly odoriferous; there, the skeleton of a chicken; on the right a mustard-pot upset, and the cloth, *passim,* defiled with stains of eggs, coffee, gravy,—but I will not go on with the picture. One *nasty* custom, however, I must notice. Eggs, instead of being eat (*eaten*) from the shell, are poured into a wine-glass, and after being duly and disgustingly churned up with butter and condiment, the mixture, according to its degree of fluidity, is forthwith either spooned into the mouth, or drunk off like a liquid. The advantage gained by this unpleasant process, I do not profess to be qualified to appreciate, but I can speak from experience to its sedative effect on the appetite of an unpractised beholder.'

In this case, the principal ground of complaint,—the *corpus delicti,*—seems to have been, that the breakfast-table did not look so fresh, and clean and perfect in all its arrangements at the close of the repast, as it did at the beginning. There were stains upon the cloth: and portions of the articles of food, which were partly eaten, remained upon the dishes. Truly, our author is a reasonable man. In Edinburgh, they doubtless manage these things very differently. There, a mustard-pot that is overturned leaves no spot behind it: the cloth and the napkins that have served the purpose of the meal are as smooth and as glossy as they were when they left the landlady's press, and the bones of the chickens and the fish, as fast as they are denuded to satisfy the appetite of the guests, put on spontaneously a new covering, and look as plump as though nothing had happened. In the same way it is not improbable, that within the precincts of our author's former experience, the linen appropriated to personal use remained as clean and sweet after two or three weeks' wearing, as when first put on: and this may partly account for the singular fact, that an individual, so peculiarly nice in all his habits, and so decidedly averse to 'nastiness' of any kind,—to use his own elegant phraseology,—should have paid so little attention to the occasional refreshment of his costume during his residence at Bunker's, that his fellow-boarders, if we are rightly informed, actually held a formal meeting on the subject, at which they passed a resolution, requesting him to change his linen; and at length, finding his manners incorrigibly offensive, were compelled to abate him as a common nuisance, by requesting the master of the house to deliver them from his company.

At the egg question we have already glanced, and its im-

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portance is hardly such, as to justify our resuming it at much length. Our author regards it as entirely heterodox, to eat eggs in any other way than directly from the shell. Baron Haussez, on the other hand, denounces the practice of eating them from the shell, as the *nec plus ultra* of barbarism. Highly as we think of the civilization and refinement of the Athens of Great Britain, we are compelled to say, that, on a question of this kind, the authority of the minister of Charles X. is decidedly preferable to that of a Scotch lieutenant on half-pay.

As to the rapidity with which the breakfast was eaten,—and this is one of our author's great grievances,—the real difficulty in this particular case seems to have been that, overdone by the fatigues of the preceding day, perhaps by the pleasures of the parting feast at Niblo's, he had slept too late, and did not reach the table until the company had nearly finished. This circumstance accounts satisfactorily for the early disappearance of the other guests; and for the comparatively disordered state in which he appears to have found the arrangements of the repast. The same topic is, however, repeatedly adverted to on other occasions, which do not admit of the same explanation. Thus, in his account of the dinner at the hotel on the same day, our author states, that he 'beheld the same scene of *gulping* and swallowing, as if for a wager, which his observation at breakfast had prepared him to expect. Each individual seemed to *pitchfork* his food down his *gullet*, without the smallest attention to the wants of his neighbor.' In these remarks, the worthy captain,—if captain he be,—seems to have been a little less select in his choice of terms, than might have been wished, or,—considering the high standard of delicacy he employs in judging the conduct and language of others,—perhaps expected. But without dwelling upon these *minutiae*, as a too great rapidity in despatching their meals has been for some years past a standing topic of reproach upon the Americans, by all the British travellers, and as the matter admits, we think, of an easy and simple explanation, we proceed to treat it very briefly on its merits.

We are of opinion, then, that the length of time devoted to the business of eating is every where determined by personal and accidental considerations, rather than by any peculiarities of national character. The French peasant, for example, who dines upon a piece of brown bread, seasoned perhaps with a

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morsel of cheese, or an onion, will spare himself the trouble even of sitting down to table, and may often be seen despatching his simple repast, with great *goût* and gaiety, in the open air at his cottage door. The substantial burgher of all countries, on the other hand, who fares more or less handsomely, if not sumptuously, every day, will probably devote something like an hour to his principal meal. Again; a party of friends, who meet together at the close of the day, in form to dine, but in fact to enjoy each other's conversation and company, will prolong the meeting for several hours; while the same party, on the other hand, with the same viands before them, if restricted in time by any accidental circumstance, will be compelled to abridge their conversation, and to devote themselves chiefly to the mere satisfaction of the wants of nature. Now the error into which the whole herd of British travellers, and our author *tout le premier*, have fallen in regard to this subject, proceeds, as we conceive, from their having overlooked the last of these incontestible truths. The conclusions of these gentlemen, respecting the state of society, manners and literature in the United States, are, as is well known, the results, in general, of observations made in taverns, steamboats, and stage-coaches. That the meals, which are eaten by the travellers in stage-coaches at the public tables in the taverns where they stop along the road, are commonly despatched with some rapidity, is no doubt true: but it is equally certain that there is a special reason for this, which does not operate with the same force upon the nation at large. When a stage-coach stops at a tavern, the company are allowed about half an hour,—perhaps forty minutes,—to breakfast or to dine; and as the time of arrival is uncertain, a quarter or a third part even of this brief space must elapse, before the dishes are placed upon the table. What then is to be done? Is the traveller to undertake to 'loiter and lounge:'—to 'dip into newspapers:'—to 'allow himself an interval of repose in mastication?' If he did, the coachman's horn would sound before he had finished the first cup of coffee, or the first morsel of beef. Is he to refrain entirely from eating, rather than not take his meals with all the leisure of a British nobleman at his seat in the country? Neither appetite nor health would permit this course. What then, we repeat, is he to do? The answer is plain;—not '*gulp and swallow as if for a wager:*'—not '*pitch-fork his food down his gullet*, without the least attention to

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the wants of his neighbors;'—for we do not admit that these coarse phrases give a correct notion of the manner of proceeding at any decent public table in this country, or of any thing except the want of good breeding in the writer that uses them: but—put formality in his pocket, and without dawdling over newspapers or stopping to discuss disputed points in theology or politics, seat himself at the table and make a moderate meal with all convenient despatch, that he may be ready to take his place in the coach, at the time appointed. This is what the traveller in stage-coaches is compelled to do, and what he really does, not merely in this country, but all the world over.

Such we suppose to be the secret of the extraordinary rapidity in the despatch of meals in this country, which has for several years past given so much uneasiness to the British travellers. On the occasion particularly alluded to by our author, the persons, whose early departure from the table annoyed him so much, had probably arrived fifteen minutes before in one coach, and were going away fifteen minutes after in another. That gentlemen, who meet in the way of dinner parties for conversation and society, are in any haste to separate, is so far from being true, that the prevailing error, here as in England, is precisely the opposite one. In France, the practice is for the whole company to retire from the table together, on these occasions, at the close of the meal, which seldom occupies more than an hour and a half. Here, on the contrary, as in England, it is usual for the gentlemen to remain after the ladies have retired, and sit over their wine two or three hours in succession, not unfrequently till midnight. If this do not satisfy our author, we should recommend it to him to look well to his own ways, and join the Temperance Society as speedily as possible. For ourselves, if we were disposed to suggest to our countrymen any change in their habits in this particular, the counsel we should give them would certainly be not to prolong but to abridge their potations, and adjourn in better season than they now do to the drawing-room.

Without enlarging any farther upon this subject, we shall merely add, that the standard of decorum at the public dinner-tables in this country seems to be at least as high as in England,—if we may draw any general conclusions from the following account of the proceedings of the Liverpool Agricultur-

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al Society, on a recent occasion of this description. We have been present at a considerable number of the public festivals of Agricultural and other Societies in this country, but have never happened to witness any 'new surtouts split from the collar downwards,'—any 'unauthorized visibility of white under vestures,—'any black print of a boot on the pure damask beside our plate,'—or any disposition in the guests to 'peregrinate amongst decanters, glasses and plates' upon the top of the tables: all which, and more, appear to have been among the interludes and *divertissemens* of the Liverpool dinner, and may, perhaps, have become general in the mother country.

'The annual dinner was announced to be given in Lucas's Repository, Great Charlotte street, at five o'clock; and considerably prior to that hour, the door was besieged by a company, of whom, as far as could be judged outwardly, it did not seem that a good dinner was the last thing to stand in fear. Before the opening of the door, the crowd increased much in numbers, and more in impatience, and when, at length, a small crevice was made, it agreed so little with their expectation of making a full sweep upon the viands when the large folding gates should have expanded for their simultaneous ingress, that out of revenge the crushing became only more violent and determined, till it might have been doubted whether the wrong party had not been brought out of the Infirmary yard to dine, and the visiters and candidates left behind. In vain the persons keeping the entrance cried out shame, and those who were nearly in enforced upon the rear the uselessness of struggling, so long as all were sure of admission; the hunching, and elbowing, and complaining still continued, in a way which, it was very plain from the unequivocal expressions of some of the sufferers, will be certain of allowing more room at the door-way on a subsequent occasion. That the affair was egregiously mismanaged was expressed in very unceremonious terms, and if the right honorable chairman had found no other means of entering the room than by enduring the compressure of such an immense mass of human bodies, till it appeared sufficient to have flattened the two sides of his ribs together as easily as it would have flattened his hat, we think he would have excepted that part of the day's proceeding from the character of being 'an honor to the town of Liverpool.' We can only say, that however such a manipulating might be sustained before dinner, it would not have done after. Amidst all this suffering, it was not to be supposed that the minor evils of rent garments, and seams split open, would be wanting: accordingly, the wo-begone aspect of many a good piece of broad-

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cloth attested the desperate conflict it had passed through; people, however, were too glad to get in, although it might be in the garb of a magpie, through the *unauthorized visibility of their white under vestures.*

'It would certainly have taken something more than ordinarily accommodating tempers withinside, to have restored good humor, after all the spleen engendered at the entrance. The opinions on the entertainment ought, therefore, in justice to be received with that qualification. The dishes supplied were of the best kind, substantial, and in sufficient abundance, and the number of the guests, which amounted to between six and seven hundred, must also be taken into consideration. This, indeed, gave occasion for some especial congratulations from the head of the table, and no one can deny that there was a satisfaction in seeing the agricultural interest of the country in such a flourishing state, and so many of its friends rallying round the cause; but we speak of the dinner itself; and we do think, that if, when you have survived the perils and punishment of the passage in, you sit down, albeit with the *back of your new surtout split from the collar downwards*, resolving to console your stomach at the table for what you have suffered in your liver at the door, some subject, much more hungry than polite, runs across the table, leaving the *black print of his boot on the pure damask beside your plate*, or shaking the questionable dirt from his sole over the viand upon which your mouth was already feeding by anticipation, and all this, because, having run up between two long rows of tables, and finding neither room nor escape at the top, he is obliged to scale over and *peregrinate amongst decanters, and glasses, and plates*, till he is lucky enough to find a location; if you are to shift for your dinner as you best can, amidst an accumulation of the dirty plates, exhibiting the refuse of the first course in agreeable variety, simply because there are no waiters, or they will not attend to you; if when the cheese and celery is placed on some of the tables, after waiting till you are tired, as a last argument you peremptorily refuse to allow the cloth to stir till it is brought, (in which, though done for the sake of justice, you cannot help taking the appearance of a greedy clownishness,) and are at length compelled to submit with a bad grace on the solemn assurance to every successive application that there is none to be had; if these are the ordinary concomitants of an agricultural feast, they are inconveniences for which neither the compliments of a secretary of state, nor the bad speeches and worse songs of a young heir of nobility, are an adequate recompense.'

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If we may trust to the accuracy of the anecdote related in the following paragraph, which rests, however, on merely newspaper authority, it would seem that our author attempted to introduce into this country the agreeable innovation of 'peregrinating amongst decanters, glasses and plates' upon the dinner table, which was practised with so much success at Liverpool, and may perhaps have become general in England. We may remark, *en passant*, that notwithstanding his great complaints of the rapidity with which food is *bolted*,—to use another of his choice phrases,—in this country, it would seem that on this occasion he despatched business with much more expedition than his fellow-travellers, and that he was too impatient of their delay even to wait for the retirement of the ladies.

'Colonel Hamilton, so called, the author of "Men and Manners in America," conducted himself while in this country with less of the air of a gentleman or man of good breeding, than any traveller who has visited us for years. From all parts of the country we have anecdotes of his conduct, which reflect upon him the utmost discredit. One of them is related as follows in the Albany Argus:—"On the passage of the Hudson, in one of our most richly furnished day boats, the table arrangements of which, as well as the whole internal government, are particularly well ordered, Captain H., seated at breakfast, on the cushioned seat inside of the table, with ladies on each side of him, rose before a single lady had left the table, and attempted to step upon and across it. He was arrested by the prompt and loud command of the captain of the boat. 'Down, Sir! No man puts his foot upon my table, whilst I have the honor to sit at its head.' The Englishman shrank back, chagrined and rebuked. Indeed, such was his mortification, that although he had entered and paid his passage to Albany, he stopped at the first landing, (West Point.) Whether it was on this occasion that, as the N. Y. Mirror intimates, he was rebuked by the host of the West Point Hotel, for a want of civility in the ladies' drawing-room, we are not informed."'

From the inexorable severity of our author in every thing relating to the economy of the table, one would naturally conclude that he belonged to a community in which the science of cookery was carried to the highest perfection, and the etiquette of the banqueting-room understood and practised with the nicest exactness. How far this is really the case in England, our readers have been enabled in part to judge from the



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heresy into which he and most of his countrymen have fallen in regard to the proper manner of eating eggs, and which we have already exposed upon the unquestionable authority of one of the ex-ministers of Charles X.,—a prince renowned for his love of good eating,—and who, unfortunately for him, thought much more, in arranging his cabinet, of the gastronomical attainments of the candidates for his favor, than of their political principles. That this is not the only error into which the English have fallen in regard to this matter, and that the science of eating and drinking is not in general carried by them to such a degree of perfection as to authorize a traveller, in his quality of Englishman, to come here and take us to task, *ex cathedrâ*, for some pretended infractions of the strict rules of gastronomy, is rendered sufficiently probable by the following remarks, which we borrow from the same authentic source alluded to above.

'To enjoy one's self at table is, in France, an axiom of good sense and good company. In England, on the contrary, to eat to live, seems to be the sole object; there the refinements of cookery are unknown. It is not, in a word, a science; neither does the succession in which dishes should be served up appear to be studied. To cover a table with immense pieces, boiled or roasted, and to demolish them, in the confusion in which chance has placed them, appears to be the whole gastronomic science of the country. The most ordinary seasoning of the English *cuisine* is a profusion of spices, unsparingly thrown into the sauces. To correct the effect of this, recourse is had to the insipid simplicity of plain-boiled vegetables, which continually circulate round the table, and with which the host would fain load the guest's plate. The meat is either boiled or roasted. The fish is always boiled, and is served invariably with melted butter. The numerous transformations which the natives of the deep undergo before appearing on a French table, are altogether unknown in England. Eggs are excluded from English dinner tables, and even when produced at other meals, they are served in the shell; for the talent of making an omelette enters not into the education of an English cook. English fowls are of an indifferent quality; and game is subjected to a process of roasting which deprives it of all its flavor. The confectionary is badly made and without variety. The vegetables, condemned only to figure as correctives of a too exciting *cuisine*, do not appear upon the table. The *entremets* are limited to a very scanty supply of creams and insipid jellies.

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'The following is the order in which an English dinner is served. The first course comprises two soups of different kinds; one highly peppery, in which float morsels of meat; the other a soup *à la Française*. They are placed at either extremity of the table, and helped by the master and mistress of the house. They are succeeded by a dish of fish, and by roast beef, of which the toughest part is served round. Where there is no *plateau*, a salad occupies the middle of the table. This course being removed, regular *entrées* are brought in, and the servants hand round dishes with divisions, containing vegetables. The course which follows is equivalent to the second course in France; but, prepared without taste, it is served confusedly. Each guest attacks (without offering to his neighbor) the dish before him.

'The creams have often disappeared before the roast is thought of; which, ill-carved, always comes cold to him who is to partake of it. The English carve on the dinner table, and as, before proceeding to this operation, each person is asked whether he wishes to taste of the dish or not, a considerable time is lost in fetching the plate of the person who accepts. A dinner never lasts less than two hours and a half or three hours, without including the time the gentlemen sit at table after the departure of the ladies. The salad appears again before the dessert, flanked by some plates of cheese. After the cloth is removed, dried and green fruit with biscuit are placed on the table. These compose the not very brilliant dessert. The serving up of the dinner, however, is the part about which the English give themselves the least trouble. Their table only presents an agreeable *coup d'œil* before dinner. It is then covered with the whitest linen, and a service of plate of greater variety, richer, and more resplendent than is to be seen in any other country.'

'It will be seen, that the objections made by Baron Haussez to the economy of an English table, are substantially the same with those which our author urges against us, the article eggs,—in which we happen to be orthodox,—always excepted. If the Americans, according to our author, '*pitch-fork their food down their gullets* without the smallest attention to their neighbors,' the English, in like manner, in the more courtly phraseology of the noble Frenchman, 'attack, without offering to their neighbors, the dish set before them.' If, even at the parting feast at Niblo's,—in many respects an agreeable exception to most of our author's experiences in this country,—'the greater part of the dishes were cold before the guests were prepared to attack them,' so in England, accord-

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ing to Baron Haussez, 'the roast, ill-carved, always comes cold to him who is to partake of it.' If, on the same great occasion in New York, there was 'no attempt to serve the chaotic entertainment in courses, a fashion, indeed, but little prevalent in the United States:' so in England, 'the succession in which dishes should be served up does not appear to be studied. To cover a table with immense pieces, boiled or roasted, and to demolish them in the confusion in which chance has placed them, appears to be the whole gastronomic science of the country.' If, in America, 'the dressed dishes are decidedly bad, the sauces being composed of little else than liquid grease,' so in England, 'the fish is always boiled, and is served invariably with melted butter.' This last point has in fact been for some time past a standing subject of reproach, on the part of continental travellers, against the natives of the fast-anchored isle. 'What a country,'—said the Neapolitan ambassador Caraccioli, after residing for some time at London,—'What a country for a Christian to live in! Twenty religions and only one kind of sauce!' This was of course the eternal melted butter.

It appears, however, that in these,—and the same is true of most of the other,—points the complaints made against the American and English domestic economy are precisely the same. We suppose the real truth to be, that both these worthies (our author and Haussez) are, perhaps with some exaggerations, partly in the right,—that the style of cooking and serving up a dinner is in fact substantially the same in England and in this country,—and that the science of gastronony is not in either carried to quite the same height of perfection, as in France. For ourselves, we cannot say, that this is with us a matter of very poignant regret. We are rather disposed, on the contrary, to apply to this subject the remark of Themistocles, who admitted that he played indifferently upon the flute, but consoled himself with the reflection, that he was a pretty good proficient in politics; or, in his own language, that he knew how to make a great state out of a little one. We make no professions of insensibility to the value of a good dinner:—'the man,' as Dr. Johnson justly observes, 'who neglects his stomach (employing a broader word), will be very apt to neglect every thing else.' But with all our respect for this valuable member, and the art which provides for satisfying its wants, we conceive that there are other arts of still more importance,

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the superiority in which is, at least, some compensation for the want of truffled turkeys and Perigord pies. But, however this may be, it is at all events quite ridiculous for an Englishman to come here and point out, with the air of making a great discovery, as blemishes in our domestic economy, the precise usages which have been for two centuries the standing topics of reproach upon his own countrymen; and which, as far as they occur at all, do in fact prevail to precisely the same extent on both sides of the Atlantic.

But it is time to quit this subject, however interesting, and proceed to something else. We have accompanied our author to the banqueting-hall, and have found him quarrelling with his bread and butter. Let us now attend him to the ball-room. Here, at least, as a military man and a bachelor, we might have expected to find him, if ever, in good humor. Unluckily, in order to substantiate his objections to the political institutions of the country, in the mode of argument which he has adopted in the work before us, it was necessary to show, not only that the gentlemen chew tobacco, and eat eggs in an irregular way, but that the *tournure* of the ladies is not exactly what it should be. If it can be made out, that the *belles* of New York and the other principal cities are deficient in the 'nameless graces' that adorn our author's countrywomen, it will follow as a matter of course, that the Constitution and laws of the United States are a complete failure: their principal object being, as is well known, to regulate the dress and deportment of the fairer part of the creation. This consideration seems, after some resistance, to have fairly overcome our author's gallantry, and he addresses himself to the agreeable task of finding fault with the appearance and manners of the New York fashionables, with a degree of resolution, that would have done honor to a better cause. The result is exhibited in the following extract.

'On the last night of the year there was a public assembly, to which I received the honor of an invitation. The ball-rooms were very tolerable, but the entrance detestable. It led close past the bar of the City Hotel, and the ladies, in ascending the stair, which, by the by, was offensively dirty, must have been drenched with tobacco-smoke. Within, however, I found assembled a great deal of beauty. At seventeen, nothing can be prettier than a smiling damsel of New York. At twenty-two,

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the same damsel, metamorphosed into a matron, has lost a good deal of her attraction. I had never been in so large and miscellaneous a party before. I looked about for solecisms of deportment, but could detect none on the part of the ladies. There was, however, a sort of *Transatlanticism* about them; and even their numerous points of resemblance to my fair countrywomen, had the effect of marking out certain shadowy differences, to be felt rather than described.

'There was certainly an entire absence of what the French call *l'air noble*,—of that look of mingled elegance and distinction, which commands admiration rather than solicits it. Yet the New York ladies are not vulgar. Far from it. I mean only to say that they are *not precisely European;* and with the possession of so much that is amiable and attractive, they may safely plead guilty to want of absolute conformity to an arbitrary standard, the authority of which they are not bound to acknowledge.

'But what shall be said of the gentlemen? Why, simply that a party of the new police, furnished forth with the requisite *toggery*, would have played their part in the ball-room, with about as much grace. There is a certain uncontrollable rigidity of muscle about an American, and a want of sensibility to the lighter graces of deportment, which makes him, perhaps, the most unhopeful of all the votaries of Terpsichore. In this respect the advantage is altogether on the side of the ladies. Their motions are rarely inelegant, and never grotesque. I leave it to other travellers to extend this praise to the gentlemen.'

The young ladies and gentlemen of New York, are certainly under great obligations to the gallant major for the civility with which he is pleased to speak of them, and will doubtless be happy to profit by his suggestions. It is rather unfortunate, that he has not been able to describe more particularly the newly-discovered offence of *Transatlanticism*, which the former are supposed to have committed, or the 'shadowy differences' between their manners, and those of his own countrywomen. In the absence of rules for the improvement of their *tournure*, our *transatlantic* fashionables will naturally look for examples, and with the view of aiding their researches, we beg leave to offer them the following description of a ball at Brighton,—one of the residences of the Court,—extracted from the late work of Prince Pückler Muscau. They will see at a glance, how much they have to gain by endeavoring to make their deportment more *precisely European.*

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'A narrow stair-case led directly into the ball-room, which was ill-lighted and miserably furnished, and surrounded with worsted cords, to divide the dancers from the spectators. An orchestra for the musicians was hung with ill-washed draperies, which looked like sheets hung out to dry. Imagine a second room near it, with benches along the walls, and a large tea-table in the middle; in both rooms, the numerous company, raven black from head to foot, *gloves inclusive;* a melancholy style of dancing, without the least trace of vivacity and joyousness, so that the only feeling you have, is that of compassion for the fatigue the poor people are enduring, and you have a true idea of the Brighton Almack's, for so these very fashionable balls are called. The whole establishment is droll enough. Miss W., to whom I was introduced, was by far the prettiest and most graceful girl in the room, and I was almost tempted to dance once more, though from vanity, (for I always danced badly,) I renounced that so-called pleasure years ago. I might safely enough have attempted it here, for, God knows, *no where do people jump about more awkwardly, and a man who waltzes in time is a real curiosity.*'

Again: we are told on the same high authority, that

'The *tournure* of the English ladies, with few exceptions, is indeed as awkward as any thing to be seen at B.—Some of them have passed a year or two in France, and are distinguished by a better *tournure* and style of dress.'

Baron Haussez's ideas on these subjects are nearly similar. He describes, in the following manner, a ball given at one of the first houses in London, and represented in the newspapers of the day, as one of the most brilliant of the season.

'At twelve o'clock the ball-room was thrown open. For a few minutes the other rooms were freed of the unpleasant crowd; but the respite was of short duration, for the carriages, which every moment continued to set down fresh company in a ratio disproportioned to the extent of the apartments, obliged, at length, a part of the assembly to take refuge in the hall, which was quietly abandoned by the servants, these latter establishing their head-quarters on the steps outside the door. To move was now impossible for those who had not the strength to use their elbows, or the courage to leave a portion of their dress in the midst of the crowd.

'The supper room was thronged with people who could not make their way out: they who, dying with thirst, in vain at-

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tempted to enter this apartment, accused those within of immoderate appetite.

'In the ball-room there was the same crowding, the same suffocation, with this additional difference, that the male dancers opposed to the approach of the crowd effective *coups de pied*, and *the ladies a certain portion of their person which shall be nameless.*'

So much for the 'nameless graces' of our author's fair countrywomen, and the *precisely European tournure*, in which the New York *belles* are, it seems, deficient. In quoting these passages from the works of the German Prince and the French Ex-minister, we desire, however, to be understood as by no means sanctioning or approving the views taken in them of English manners. These views are obviously sketched in the same spirit of wanton and malignant caricature, that distinguishes those of our author. We quote them merely as offsets to his, for the purpose of showing that other communities, which are justly regarded by all as preëminent in civilization and refinement, and the very highest circles in those communities, are obnoxious to, and have, in fact, been made the objects of similar misrepresentation. *Seek and ye shall find*, is as true of finding faults as of any thing else: and it is, we think, not a little creditable to the *tournure* of the New York *belles*, that so determined a critic as our author, proceeding in the avowed intention of seeing something wrong, —looking about, as he says himself, for solecisms of deportment,—is compelled to invent a new word a foot and a half long, the meaning of which he does not pretend to know himself, in order to be able to impute to them even a *shadow* of variation from the nicest standards of European refinement. What the charge of *transatlanticism*, if examined, would really amount to, it will be time enough to consider, when our author shall have established his claims to the character of an *arbiter elegantiarum*. As the case now stands, we cannot think that a person, whose manners are so offensive that he could not be tolerated in a respectable boarding-house,—who attempted, in the presence of ladies, to walk upon the dinner-table,—and who puts into a formal journal of his travels, language too coarse for a decent forecastle,—is qualified to sit in judgment upon the shadowy and indescribable differences between the manners of the fashionable circles of different countries.

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Our readers will judge from the specimens which we have taken, without much choice, chiefly because they happened to stand pretty near the opening of the work, of the spirit and temper, in which it is written. We cannot, of course, undertake to comment with the same detail upon all our author's sayings and doings, nor would it be necessary. A knowledge of the disposition in which he writes, is the proper antidote to his continual, and in many cases, obviously malignant and ungentlemanly misrepresentations. His remarks throughout the whole of his long tour, though not always destitute of shrewdness, and occasionally expressed with point and spirit, are marked, in general, with the same resolute spirit of fault-finding, and the same air of impertinent pretension, amounting at times to complete fatuity, which we have already noticed. At Providence, for example, the principal objects of attention, as our readers are aware, are the manufactories and the university. With most travellers, who might have occasion to pass a day in that city, it would have been a matter of course to visit these establishments, and to make the acquaintance of President Wayland, one of the most distinguished of our scientific and intellectual men. Our author disposes of this part of his subject in the following modest and summary way.

'Providence is the capital of the State of Rhode Island, and contains about 25,000 inhabitants. It stands at the foot and on the brow of a hill, which commands a complete view of the fine bay. The great majority of the houses are built of wood, interspersed, however, with tenements of brick, and a few which are at least fronted with stone. It contains considerable cotton manufactories, which,—*boasting no knowledge of such matters*,—I was not tempted to visit. The college appears a building of some extent, and is finely situated on the summit of a neighboring height. *The roads were so obstructed by snow, as to render climbing the ascent a matter of more difficulty than I was in the humor to encounter;* and so it was decreed, that Brown's College should remain by me unvisited.'

Instead of troubling his readers with dissertations on these unimportant topics, he selects for discussion the weightier matter of his own dinner at the tavern, upon which he descants in the following exquisite style.

'Having finished my ramble, I returned to the inn; where a very tolerable dinner awaited my appearance. It was the first time I had dined alone since leaving England, and, like my



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countrymen generally, I am disposed to attach considerable importance to the privilege of choosing my dinner, and the hour of eating it. It is only when alone that one enjoys the satisfaction of feeling that he is a distinct unit in creation, a being *totus, teres, atque rotundus.* At a public ordinary, he is but a fraction, a decimal, at most, but, very probably, a centesimal of a huge masticating monster, with the appetite of a Mastodon or a Behemoth. He labors under the conviction, that his meal has lost in dignity what it has gained in profusion. He is consorted involuntarily with people to whom he is bound by no tie but that of temporary necessity, and, with whom, except the immediate impulse of brutal appetite, he has probably nothing in common. A man, like an American, thus diurnally mortified and abased from his youth upwards, of course knows nothing of the high thoughts which visit the imagination of the solitary, who, having finished a good dinner, reposes with a full consciousness of the dignity of his nature, and the high destinies to which he is called. The situation is one, which naturally stimulates the whole inert mass of his speculative benevolence. He is at peace with all mankind, for *he reclines on a well-stuffed sofa,* and there are wine and walnuts on the table. He is on the best terms with himself, and recalls his own achievements in arms, literature, or philosophy, in a spirit of the most benign complacency. If he look to the future, the prospect is bright and unclouded. If he revert to the past, its "written troubles," its failures and misfortunes are erased from the volume, and his memories are exclusively those of gratified power. *He is in his slippers, and comfortable robe-de-chambre,* and what to him, at such a moment, are the world and its ambitions? I appeal to the philosopher, and he answers,—Nothing!'

This is the true Malvolio vein. 'Sitting in my state, calling my officers about me *in my branched velvet gown,* having come from a *day-bed,* where I left Olivia sleeping,—letting them know I know my place as I would they should do theirs.' &c. Even this, however, is improved upon at Philadelphia. The water-works of that city are justly reckoned among the principal curiosities of the place, and indeed of the country. These too our author declined seeing, for reasons still more extraordinary than those, which prevented him from visiting the cotton manufactories and the university at Providence.

'The Philadelphians, however, pride themselves far more on their water-works than on their State-House. Their *Io Pœans* on account of the former are loud and unceasing, and I must say, the annoyance which these occasion to a traveller, is very

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considerable. A dozen times a-day was I asked whether I had seen the water-works, and on my answering in the negative, I was told that I positively must visit them; that they were unrivalled in the world; that no people but the Americans could have executed such works, and by implication, that no one but an Englishman, meanly jealous of American superiority, would omit an opportunity of admiring their unrivalled mechanism.

'There is no accounting for the eccentricities of human character. *I had not heard these circumstances repeated above fifty times, ere I began to run restive, and determined not to visit the water-works at all.* To this resolution I adhered, in spite of all annoyance, with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause. Of the water-works of Philadelphia, therefore, I know nothing, and any reader, particularly solicitous of becoming acquainted with the principle of this remarkable piece of machinery, must consult the pages of other travellers.'

This we suppose to be the *nec plus ultra* of fatuity. That a man, possessing, no doubt, originally, the usual stock of ordinary good sense, should have permitted his head to be turned to this extent, by the little success of writing a tolerably popular second-rate novel, is a melancholy proof, in addition to a thousand others, of the facility with which that operation is performed, especially when the *knowledge-box* happens, as was probably the case in the present instance, to be naturally none of the strongest.

With Boston, and the society which he saw here, our author professes to have been very much pleased, although, as far as facts are concerned, his observations are exceedingly scanty. Having travelled by mail from Providence to Boston, and resided three weeks in the latter city, he was of course qualified to pass judgment *ex cathedrâ* upon the New England character, and accordingly writes, while at Boston, two long chapters of general remarks upon that subject. As the impression made upon him by the only part of New England which he had seen, seems to have been decidedly agreeable, one would naturally have expected that any conclusions, which he might have thought proper to draw from the materials in his possession, would have been rather favorable than otherwise. Instead of this, the two chapters are written throughout in a strain of almost unmingled invective. To draw such conclusions from such premises, argues some principle of conduct deeper than simple thoughtlessness, or mere political

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and national prejudice, and seems to require the supposition of a strong personal disgust in the writer. Whether any feeling of that kind had been generated by the gentle admonitions upon his deportment, which he is understood to have received at the hotel in New York, and on board the North River steamboat, we are not informed. He appears to have felt, that an apology was necessary for the precipitation with which he had formed his opinions. In a note upon one of the chapters alluded to, he states that 'the observations on the New England character would have been more appropriately deferred till a later period of the work, but *having written them, they must now stand where chance has placed them.* I have only to beg that they may be taken, not as the hasty impressions received during a few days' or weeks' residence in Boston, but as the final result of my observations on this interesting people, both in their own States and in other portions of the Union.' How the contents of two chapters, written at Boston, can be regarded as the results of observations made afterwards in other places, and why it was absolutely necessary that they should stand, because he had written them, our author has not condescended to explain. The presumption undoubtedly is, that it would have derogated from the dignity of so great a personage, to correct a rough draft, or even to alter the arrangement of his matter; and the passage affords another example of the same graceful modesty that shines so conspicuously in those which describe his proceedings at Philadelphia and Providence. We select from the two chapters in question a few of the more pointed and characteristic paragraphs, as specimens of the tone and manner of the whole.

'Mammon has no more zealous worshipper than your true Yankee. His homage is not merely that of the lip, or of the knee; it is an entire prostration of the heart; the devotion of all powers, bodily and mental, to the service of the idol. He views the world but as one vast exchange, on which he is impelled, both by principle and interest, to over-reach his neighbors if he can. The thought of business is never absent from his mind. To him there is no enjoyment without traffic. He travels snail-like, with his shop or his counting-house on his back, and, like other hawkers, is always ready to open his budget of little private interests for discussion or amusement. The only respite he enjoys from the consideration of his own affairs, is the time he is pleased to bestow on prying into yours. In regard to the latter, he evidently considers that he has a perfect right to unlimited

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sincerity. There is no baffling him. His curiosity seems to rise in proportion to the difficulty of its gratification. He will track you through every evasion, detect all your doublings, or, if thrown out, will hark back so skilfully on the scent, that you are at length fairly hedged in a corner.

'A New Englander passes through the statutory process of education, and enters life with the intimate conviction, that he has mastered, if not the *omne scibile*, at least every thing valuable within the domain of intellect. It never occurs to him as possible, that he may have formed a wrong conclusion on any question, however intricate, of politics or religion. He despises all knowledge abstracted from the business of the world, and prides himself on his stock of practical truths. In mind, body, and estate, he believes himself the first and noblest of God's creatures. The sound of triumph is ever on his lips, and, like a man who has mounted the first step of a ladder, it is his pride to look down on his neighbors, whom he overtops by an inch, instead of directing his attention to the great height yet to be surmounted.

'Jonathan is sober and industrious, but his reputation for honesty is at a discount. The whole Union is full of stories of his cunning frauds, and of the impositions he delights to perpetrate on his more simple neighbors. Whenever his love of money comes in competition with his zeal for religion, the latter is sure to give way. He will insist on the scrupulous observance of the Sabbath, and cheat his customer on the Monday morning. His life is a comment on the text, *Qui festinat ditescere, non erit innocens.* The whole race of Yankee pedlers, in particular, are proverbial for dishonesty. These go forth annually in thousands to lie, cog, cheat, swindle, in short, to get possession of their neighbors' property, in any manner it can be done with impunity. Their ingenuity in deception is confessedly very great. They warrant broken watches to be the best time-keepers in the world; sell pinchbeck trinkets for gold; and have always a large assortment of wooden nutmegs, and stagnant barometers. In this respect they resemble the Jews, of which race, by the by, I am assured, there is not a single specimen to be found in New England. There is an old Scotch proverb, "Corbies never pick out corbies' een."

'The New Englanders are not an amiable people. One meets in them much to approve, little to admire, and nothing to love. They may be disliked, however, but they cannot be despised. There is a degree of energy and sturdy independence about them, incompatible with contempt. Abuse them as we may, it must still be admitted they are a singular and original people.

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Nature, in framing a Yankee, seems to have given him double brains, and half heart.

'The character of the New Englanders is a subject on which, I confess, I feel tempted to be prolix. In truth, it seems to me so singular and anomalous, so compounded of what is valuable and what is vile, that I never feel certain of having succeeded in expressing the precise combination of feeling which it inspires. As a philanthropist, I should wish them to be less grasping and more contented with the blessings they enjoy, and would willingly barter a good deal of vanity, and a little substantial knavery, for an additional infusion of liberal sentiment, and generous feeling.'

It will, of course, readily occur to our readers, that this same 'New England character,' which our author is pleased to represent as so very 'singular and anomalous,' and which he has painted in such very flattering colors, is no other than that of his own countrymen, himself included, except so far as he may have metamorphosed, or, as he would probably say in his improved English, *transmogrified* himself, by his campaigns in foreign countries. Englishmen are of course Englishmen all the world over, and there is no part of the world, in which the characteristics of the common stock have been sustained with greater purity, or with a less mixture of foreign alloy, than in New England. Our author himself admits, that 'two centuries have done little to efface the character which our forefathers brought with them.' All the *gentillesses* which we have quoted above, are therefore so many pretty compliments which the gallant gentleman has paid, apparently with a most innocent unconsciousness, to his countrymen, his neighbors, and himself. We find accordingly that the objections which are here made to the New England character, though stated in an unusually ill-natured form, are no other than the standing and hackneyed topics of reproach, which have always been urged against the English of the mother country; such as excessive gravity, an external coldness and reserve, which are supposed to indicate the absence of kind and generous feelings; an exclusive devotion to gain; an indisposition to be amused, and an overweening estimate of their own advantages, political and personal. These are the charges which, for two centuries past, have rung through the continent in a thousand different forms, and are constantly repeated as often as a traveller from the south of Europe crosses the channel. In the last editions by the German Prince, and Baron Haussez, they have manifestly

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lost nothing of their pungency. The *morgue Anglaise* is a proverb at Paris. Voltaire exhausted his wit in laughing at the *milords* who were accustomed to parade their weariness,---*promener leurs ennuis*,---through all parts of Europe. Bonaparte, when he spoke of the English, never forgot to characterize them as a nation of shopkeepers, dead to every sentiment of honor and generosity, and actuated by no motive or principle but a paltry love of gain. Madame de Staël, in her Corinna, has given a picture of a Scotch tea-party, which is enough to make a man put on a fur cloak in midsummer. Count Pecchio, the last of the travellers in England, tells us, that 'the English of our day are so tranquil and so cold, that they seem to us men of ice, and that it is often said that they have no blood in their veins.' It is really not a little amusing to see these stale criticisms on the English, after having, as we have said, rung through the continent of Europe, for about two centuries, been a thousand times over examined and re-examined in England,---allowed as far as they are just; refuted, denied, or explained, as far as they are false or exaggerated, and so often reduced to their proper value, that the whole question may be regarded as finally adjudged and settled in the highest courts of appeal,---to see them, we say, hashed up anew, with no other change of form but an ample condiment of spleen, and brought forward by an Englishman with an air of importance and almost mystery, as faults newly discovered by himself in the New England character.

Of the various modifications of the English character, the two which are generally supposed to resemble each other most nearly are the New England and the Scotch. This again is allowed by our author, who says that 'in character there are many points of resemblance between the Scotch and the New Englanders.' The poisoned chalice, which he wishes to administer to our lips, returns therefore directly back to his own, not merely as an Englishman, but as a native of the particular part of the mother country, in which he happens to reside. It is true that he attempts to make a distinction between the New Englanders and the Scotch, by representing the former as a horde of sharpers, 'going forth annually by thousands into other regions, to lie, cog, cheat, and swindle,' while he gives to the Scotch a high character for honesty. It is of course needless to add, that this exclusively New England failing is precisely the one, which is habitually imputed by the English themselves,

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though in much more decent language than our author has used, to their northern neighbors. That the Scotch are a set of tall, lean, hungry, red-haired, crafty knaves, inhabiting a bleak and barren region, presenting only one agreeable prospect, namely, that of the road to London, which they annually travel in crowds for the purpose of defrauding and eating out the substance of honest John Bull proper, is the fixed belief of that respectable personage, and is no doubt as well-founded as the corresponding persuasion of a considerable portion of our own countrymen, that the Yankees are employed the greater part of their time in fabricating wooden nutmegs, wherewith to impose upon the simplicity and pick the pockets of the generous, high-minded and too-confiding South. The very remark which our author here applies to New England, that, in consequence of the extraordinary acuteness of the inhabitants in matters of business, the Jews find it impossible to get a living among them, has been, a thousand times over, made upon Scotland, and sustained as often by the identical Scotch proverb which he cites with such apparent complacency as an illustration of it.

The charges made by our author against the New England character, being, as we have seen, precisely the same with those which are habitually urged against the English character, and particularly the Scotch modification of it, whatever foundation there may really be for them, come with rather an ill grace from a traveller, who is himself an Englishman, and from the north country. There are also some personal considerations in our author's case, which, duly weighed, might perhaps have satisfied him, that some at least, and those the most offensive of his accusations, were not so entirely free from doubt as he appears to have supposed them. He lauds himself continually, throughout his work, upon the favorable reception which he met with every where, and, as far as this city is concerned, we can vouch for the correctness of his representation. Now if the Yankees are so entirely given up to the worship of Mammon as he describes them to be :—if their homage is not merely that of the lip, or the knee, but an entire prostration of the heart, the devotion of all their powers, bodily and mental, to the service of the idol ;—how happens it, that they found so much time to devote to the author of Cyril Thornton ? What had they to gain, by giving him dinners and balls,—by leaving their compting-rooms and offices, to accompany him on his visits

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to the objects that engage the attention of a traveller, when,—as did not always happen,---he would so far condescend from his high estate as to consent to look at them? He brought with him neither merchandise to sell, nor money to buy. There was nothing very imposing in the rank of a Scotch Captain on half pay, and certainly nothing very attractive in our author's conversation and manners. He brought, it is true, letters of introduction to respectable persons in most of our cities. These, however, he did not take the trouble of delivering in person, but, as he is careful to inform us, regularly transmitted through the post-office,—a piece of rudeness, which, in any other country, would have entirely shut him out of society. How happened it then, we repeat, that an unknown foreigner,—unassisted by rank, fortune, or any personal advantage,—coarse and offensive in his manners, —almost unintelligible in conversation,—dropping from the clouds into the midst of a community of strangers, was yet received with marked attention wherever he went? It is needless to say, that the only effective letter of recommendation, which he brought with him, was his literary reputation. The cultivated circles in our cities were curious to make the acquaintance of the writer of a book, which they had read with pleasure, and, in consideration of his talents, cheerfully overlooked the offensive peculiarities in his personal deportment, although they probably did not anticipate the outpouring of malignity with which their civilities have been repaid. Had they been as exclusively devoted to money as he is pleased to represent them, he might and probably would have travelled from Eastport to New Orleans, without receiving any other notice than such as befel him in the North River steamboat and the New York hotel.

The devotion to literary—or to speak more generally—intellectual power, that prevails in this country, is, in fact, one of the remarkable traits in the national character, and is much more deep and fervent,—whatever our author may think of it,—than that which is paid to wealth. Mere wealth commands in this country,—as it must, and when tolerably well administered, ought to command every where,—consideration and respect; but creates no feeling of interest in its owner. Intellectual eminence, especially when accompanied by high moral qualities, seems to operate like a charm upon the hearts of the whole community. This effect is much more perceptible here than in Europe, where the intellectual men are overshadowed by



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an hereditary privileged class, who regard them every where as inferior, and in some countries refuse to associate with them at all. The highest professional or literary distinction gives no admission to most of the courts of Europe, and only on a very unequal footing to the fashionable circles. A lawyer or a clergyman of talent is occasionally allowed a seat at the foot of a nobleman's table, but to aspire to the hand of his daughter would be the height of presumption. At the close of a long life of labor he takes his seat, too late to receive any great satfaction from his new position, in the House of Lords, as Chancellor, Chief-Justice, or Bishop. Through the whole active period of his life, he has moved, as a matter of course, in a secondary sphere. With us, on the contrary, great wealth, the only accidental circumstance that confers distinction, is commonly the result of a life of labor. The intellectual men assume at once, and maintain through life, a commanding position among their contemporaries,—give the tone in the first social circles,—and, at the maturity of their powers and influence, receive from their fellow-citizens demonstrations of attachment and respect, which have rarely, if ever, been shown before to the eminent men of any other country. The Presidentships and the Governorships, the places in the cabinet, and on the bench of justice, in Congress and in the State Legislatures,—the commissions in the Army and Navy,—the foreign embassies,—elsewhere the monopoly of a few privileged families,—are here the rewards of intellectual preëminence. Lord Brougham, though certainly in every way one of the most illustrious and truly deserving public characters that have appeared in England in modern times, has never received from his countrymen any proof of approbation half so flattering, as the sort of civic triumph with which Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster were lately welcomed on their respective visits to the East and the West. Mr. Irving, since his late return from Europe, has been the object of more attention of a public kind, than was shown through the whole course of his life to Sir Walter Scott, undoubtedly the most popular British writer of the last century.

This respect for intellectual power, which forms so remarkable a feature in the national character, ought not to have escaped the attention of a traveller, whose pretensions to notice are founded entirely upon that basis, and who had experienced

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the operation of it so favorably in his own person. It has often been evinced, in a very pleasing way, in the testimonials of regard shown to the memory of distinguished literary men, even of foreign countries. At the late lamented decease of the illustrious British poet, just alluded to, the public feeling of regret was evidently quite as strong in this country as in England. Subscriptions were raised at New York, to aid in the purchase of Abbotsford for his family: and a monument to his memory is now in preparation at Albany. We regret to learn that the object, in which the New York subscriptions were intended to aid, is not likely to be effected. The marble tablet that covers the remains of Henry Kirke White, in the churchyard of Nottingham in England, was placed there by a gentleman of this city, no otherwise interested in his memory, than by the pleasure he had taken in reading his poems. The same disposition to honor the memory of the illustrious dead exists in England, but has not in every instance been acted upon in an equally graceful and appropriate manner. The intention, entertained by some of the citizens of London to erect a new monument to Milton, on the occasion of repairing the church of St. Giles, where his remains were deposited, led to a transaction which does but little credit to the parties concerned. The following account of it was copied from the Diary of General Murray, into a late number of the London Monthly Magazine.

'24th August, 1790.—The church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, being in a somewhat dilapidated state, the parish resolved to commence repairing it, and this was deemed a favorable opportunity to raise a subscription for the purpose of erecting a monument to the memory of our immortal bard, Milton, who, it was known, had been buried in this church. The parish register book bore the following entry:—"12th November, 1674, John Milton, gentleman, consump'con, chancell." Mr. Ascough, whose grandfather died in 1759, aged 84, had been often heard to say, that Milton was buried under the desk in the chancel. Messrs. Strong, Cole, and other parishioners, determined to search for the remains, and orders were given to the workmen, on the first of this month, to dig for the coffin. On the third, in the afternoon, it was discovered; the soil in which it had been deposited was of a calcareous nature, and it rested upon another coffin, which there can be no doubt was that of Milton's father,

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report having stated that the poet was buried, at his request, near the remains of his parent; and the same register book contained the entry, "John Milton, gentleman, 15th March, 1646." No other coffin being found in the chancel, which was entirely dug over, there can be no uncertainty as to their identity. Messrs. Strong and Cole, having carefully cleansed the coffin with a brush and wet sponge, ascertained that the exterior wooden case, in which the leaden one had been enclosed, was entirely mouldered away, and the leaden coffin contained no inscription or date. At the period when Milton died, it was customary to paint the name, age, &c. of the deceased, on the wooden covering, no plates or inscription being then in use; but all had long since crumbled into dust. The leaden coffin was much corroded; its length was five feet ten inches. The above gentlemen, satisfied as to the identity of the precious remains, and having drawn up a statement to that effect, gave orders on Tuesday, the 3d, to the workmen to fill up the grave; but they neglected to do so, intending to perform that labor on the Saturday following. On the next day, the 4th, a party of parishioners, Messrs. Cole, Laming, Taylor, and Holmes, having met to dine at the residence of Mr. Fountain, the overseer, the discovery of Milton's remains became the subject of conversation, and it was agreed upon that they should disinter the body, and examine it more minutely.—At eight o'clock at night, heated with drink, and accompanied by a man named Hawksworth, who carried a flambeau, they sallied forth, and proceeded to the Church. The sacrilegious work now commences. The coffin is dragged from its gloomy resting-place. Holmes made use of a mallet and chisel, and cut open the coffin slantways from the head to the breast. The lead being doubled up, the corpse became visible; it was enveloped in a thick white shroud, the ribs were standing up regularly, but the instant the shroud was removed they fell. The features of the countenance could not be traced, but the hair was in an astonishingly perfect state; its color a light brown, its length six inches and a half, and, although somewhat clotted, it appeared, after having been well washed, as strong as the hair of a living being. The short locks growing towards the forehead, and the long ones flowing from the same place down the sides of the face, it became obvious that these were most certainly the remains of Milton. The 4to print of the poet, by Faithorne, taken from life in 1670, four years before he died, represents him as wearing his hair exactly in the above manner. Fountain said he was determined to have two of the teeth, but as they resisted the pressure of his fingers, *he struck the jaw with a paving stone*

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and several teeth then fell out. There were only five in the upper jaw, and these were taken by Fountain; the four that were in the lower jaw were seized upon by Taylor, Hawkesworth, and the sexton's man. *The hair*, which had been carefully combed and tied together before the interment, *was forcibly pulled off the skull* by Taylor and another; but Ellis the player, who had now joined the party, told the former that being a good hairworker, if he would let him have it he would pay a guinea bowl of punch; adding, that such a relic would be of great service, by bringing his name into notice. Ellis, therefore, became possessed of all the hair: he likewise took a part of the shroud, and a bit of the skin of the skull; indeed, he was only prevented carrying off the head by the sextons, Hoppy and Grant, who said that *they intended to exhibit the remains*, which was afterwards done, *each person paying 6d. to view the body*. These fellows, I am told, gained near 100*l.* by the exhibition. Laming put one of the leg bones in his pocket. My informant assured me, continued Mr. Thornton, that while the work of profanation was proceeding, the gibes and jokes of these vulgar fellows made his heart sick, and he retreated from the scene, feeling as if he had witnessed the repast of a vampire. Viscount C. who sat near me, said to Sir G., "This reminds me of the words of one of the Fathers of the Church, 'and little boys have played with the bones of great kings.'"'

In the elegant Latin epistle, which the minstrel of Paradise Lost addressed to his father in defence of his devotion to poetry, he ventures to anticipate, with the modest assurance of conscious merit, the posthumous honors that awaited his memory. —'My features too,' he says, 'the sculptor may perhaps one day design in marble, entwining the hair with a garland of Paphian myrtle or Parnassian laurel; but I shall be resting at the time in careless peace.'

> Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
> Nectens aut Paphiâ myrti aut Parnasside lauri
> Fronde comas, at ego securâ pace quiescam.

The poet's vision of posthumous fame has been fully realized. His bust in marble surmounts his monument in Westminster abbey, upon which these beautiful verses appear as an inscription. The prediction of the undisturbed quiet of his last resting-place was, it seems, less fortunate. If we were disposed to retort upon the countrymen of our author the

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charges of cupidity, coarseness and utter destitution of all the finer feelings of our nature, which he so liberally makes upon us, we should want no better evidence in support of them, as far at least as a single transaction may be supposed to illustrate the character of a nation, than the fact of the citizens of the metropolis itself invading by night the sanctuary where the bones of Milton were deposited with those of his honored parent, dragging them forth from their consecrated resting-place, breaking the jaw-bones to fragments with paving-stones, pulling off the hair by force from the skull, alternately quarrelling and joking about the division of the spoil, and finally exhibiting the whole to the public for sixpence a head. If the New-York shopman was denounced by our author as a *brutal barbarian*, for venturing to look at him a little too sharply, we should like to know what epithets he would bestow upon the overseer and other parishioners of St. Giles, Cripplegate. We have no inclination, however, to pursue this line of argument, and are fully aware that this disgraceful transaction is in no way connected with the national character, and proves nothing but the brutality of the wretches immediately concerned in it. We have copied it, not as bearing at all upon the present question, but as a narrative, in itself very curious, and fraught with a deep and strong, though painful sort of interest.

While we have no disposition to recriminate upon our author by charging his countrymen with the base propensities which he attributes to us, it is also not our intention to enter into a formal defence of the common English character against the objections which he makes to it, as exemplified here, and which have been, as we have said, reduced to their proper value a thousand times over. The most offensive and at the same time the most groundless of them, is that of a want of generous and benevolent feelings, founded apparently upon a supposed reserve in exterior deportment,---as if a remarkable outward warmth and vivacity of manner were the natural indications of profound sensibility. Every one knows that the case is directly the reverse. The substantial benevolence of the English character, unquestionably one of its most remarkable features, displays itself here, as in the mother country, not in professions, or forms of courtesy, but in acts. There is probably no community on the face of the globe, of equal resources,

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where larger appropriations are annually made for objects tending to the relief of distress,---the promotion of learning and good morals,---the encouragement of patriotic and generous feelings, and in general for all purposes, appertaining to the higher department of our nature, than in New England. If it were worth while to go into any discussion upon the subject, we might mention, as proofs of what we have just stated, the proceedings of this description that have taken place in this city during the last year. In the course of the last winter, the project, which had been formed two or three years ago for the foundation of an institution for the Education of the Blind, came to maturity. The plan was submitted to the Legislature of Massachusetts, which made a handsome appropriation to the object. An appeal was then made to the benevolence of individuals, which was promptly answered, by the donation from an eminent citizen of his own residence,—one of the best houses in the city,—for the use of the Institution, on the condition that the sum of fifty thousand dollars should be contributed by other individuals,—a condition which was satisfied within a month. Of this large sum, more than eleven thousand dollars were raised at the Fancy Fair, held by the ladies; and it is really worthy of remark, that a much larger sum was obtained in this way, on this occasion, in the comparatively little city of Boston, than at a similar Fair, held about the same time at London, for the interesting purpose of the relief of distressed foreigners, under the immediate patronage of the ladies of the Royal Family, and all the principal nobility. Hardly was the subscription for the Institution for the Education of the Blind closed, when a new effort was made to obtain funds for the erection of the monument on Bunker-Hill, and within a few weeks nearly fifty thousand dollars were collected for this purpose, principally by the exertions of the mechanics. While these movements were in progress, a collection of three or four thousand dollars was made for the relief of a college in the State of Ohio,—another of the same amount for the Colonization Society, and several more of less importance, beside the regular and standing appropriations for literary, charitable and missionary institutions, previously in existence. Such is the extent of the sacrifices made for these purposes, during the present year: we mention them not as extraordinary,

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because we do not suppose that they much exceed the average amount annually contributed in the same way, but simply as the facts nearest at hand that bear upon the question. The amount is certainly considerable for a community, of which the population, including that of the neighboring towns that generally join in such contributions, does not exceed a hundred thousand souls.

The truth is, that our author has entirely mistaken the basis of the New England character, when he states that a selfish and calculating spirit is the leading feature in it. The New England character, like the English and German, which are different varieties of the same common type, is naturally ardent, enthusiastic and imaginative. The German race, which has spread itself over the whole north of Europe, and is now spreading itself over the whole of North America, has always exhibited in all its various locations, and under all the names which it has borne and still bears in different parts of the world, a highly poetical temperament, the basis of which is, of course, a keen sensibility to all the influences of nature, whether physical or moral. We find, accordingly, that Madame de Staël, in her powerful analysis of the German character, considers its leading and characteristic feature as *Enthusiasm;* agreeing in this opinion with the common sentiment of competent judges. Restrained in some degree in its development,—so far as the forms of ordinary social intercourse are concerned,—by the natural effect of a less propitious climate, the ardor of the German temperament has turned itself chiefly to literature and action. While the manners of the nations of the south of Europe are more lively than those of their northern neighbors, the literature of the north is, on the other hand, more poetical, and the moral tone of society more lofty and generous. Count Pecchio, whom we just now quoted, has correctly seized this idea, and has expressed it in a happy manner with immediate reference to England. 'A variety of circumstances,' he remarks, 'tend to repress the passions on frivolous occasions, and to give them the reins on those of importance. In family matters, in social intercourse, in every day discussion, they (the English) exhibit calmness, coolness, deliberation,—in great enterprises, in war, in the perils of the country, courage and enthusiasm. The same Englishman, who hardly returns your salute, and who sits at table with you,

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like a Chinese image, in the day of battle, or in the heat of a contested election, gives himself up to unbounded enthusiasm. Where is the enterprise, by which glory may be gained, that the Englishman does not engage in, heart and soul? Mungo Park plunges alone into the deserts of Africa: unintimidated by the mistake of his first journey, he risks a second, and perishes. Captain Cochrane returns on foot from Kamtchatka to Petersburgh, a distance of six thousand miles, alone and unfriended, as if it had been a walk in Hyde Park: he goes to America to take another stroll across the Cordilleras, and dies. Lord Byron abandons the sweet converse of the muses, the yet dearer smiles of the Italian fair, to die on a foreign soil, in defence of the freedom of a foreign land. Read the life of Sir Robert Wilson, and you will see how many perils he has voluntarily encountered in the cause of the oppressed, whether kings, nations, or individuals. Any of these men, who showed in these cases an enthusiasm worthy of a knight-errant, would have disdained in social life to be guilty of an act of impatience, even to a servant.'

So far as New England is concerned, the history of the country, from its settlement up to the present day, is little else than a record of the continual sacrifice of every selfish consideration to the loftiest moral principles that can operate upon the human mind. The foundation of the New England Colonies was an act of heroic self-sacrifice on the altar of Religion. So was the whole existence of the pilgrims for the first century and a half, encamped as they were, in a still unsubdued wilderness, with their muskets forever at their sides, a line of French fortresses along the whole frontier, and the Indian with his fire-brand and tomahawk at the back-door. Was this a position to be taken and sustained by men who acted upon selfish calculations of pecuniary profit? See them in the war of 1745, marching out under Sir William Pepperel to the conquest of Louisburg. Was this an act of selfish calculation? What had they to do with the fortress of Louisburg, or with the Austrian succession, which furnished the pretext for the war? See them in the war of 1756, rushing forward a second time with a sort of enthusiasm upon the same gratuitous service, and actually keeping on foot a larger proportion of their population than the Emperor Napoleon ever did of the French, at the height of his military frenzy. The peace of 1763 finally relieved our



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fathers from the dangerous neighborhood of the Indians and the French, but only to expose them to another series of hostile invasions from the Government itself. What was now the dictate of selfish calculation? Undoubtedly to pay the tea and stamp taxes, and go on quietly making money. Their whole conduct, from the close of the war of 1756 until the peace of Independence, was another exhibition of the same heroic self-sacrificing spirit, which occasioned the settlement of the country. Nor was it the peculiar virtue of a few superior minds. The Adamses, the Otises, the Warrens and the Quincys embodied and exemplified the spirit that prevailed through the country, and carried the whole population with them at every step in their progress. Our author's view of the New England character is, in fact, the very reverse of the truth. Instead of being governed by an exclusive devotion to gain, these Colonies are almost the only ones in the whole number, that were not founded with a view to pecuniary profit or any secular advantage. Most of the other settlements were made with the direct, avowed, and undoubtedly very honorable purpose of acquiring property. With the pilgrim fathers of New England, the service of God, as they understood it, was the exclusive principle of action; and their extraordinary success affords a fine illustration of the truth of the memorable saying of a profound writer, that 'no state has ever flourished, of which the foundations were not, in one way or another, laid in Religion.' That the foundations of the New England Colonies were so laid, has been the real source, not only of their unparalleled prosperity, but in a great measure of the prosperity of the whole country, which has always received, and still receives, its principal impulse from this quarter. How far the noble principles and sentiments, that uniformly actuated our fathers, are sustained in the present generation of the inhabitants of New England, it is of course not for us to say: but as our author extends his censure over the whole period of our history, and specifically includes in it the venerable founders of the Colonies, it is quite apparent that his opinion, at least, is entitled to very little attention; and that he is incapacitated, either by ignorance of facts or obliquity of moral feeling, from forming a correct judgment upon the subject.

We have been gradually drawn into a somewhat longer dissertation upon this topic than we had intended, and must

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hasten to take up the few others, upon which our limits will allow us to touch. In giving an account of his visit to Washington, our author comments at some length upon the character and manners of the principal persons employed in the various departments of the Government, upon the modes of proceeding in Congress, and upon the general principles and operation of our political institutions. As the work was avowedly written for political effect, it is here, of course, if any where, that we are to look for the substantial part of it. We regret to say, that this portion has no more pretension than the rest to the praise of either accurate observation, just and deep thought, or the manly candor and generosity of sentiment, which are never forgotten even by a political opponent, who means to combine with that character the manners and feelings of a gentleman. The strain of thought is common-place; the language coarse, even to indecency, and the statements so entirely at variance with fact, as to become at times almost ludicrous. Of this description is the attempt to make it appear that the British Parliament is a body compelled by pressure of business to be economical of time, while the American Congress does nothing, and has in fact very little to do.

'It is evident that such a style of discussion,—if discussion it can be called,—could only become prevalent in an assembly with an abundance of leisure for the enactment of these oratorical interludes. In a body like the British Parliament, compelled by the pressure of business to be economical of time, it could not possibly be tolerated. The clamorous interests of a great nation are matters too serious to be trifled with, and time is felt to be too valuable for expenditure on speeches better fitted for a spouting club, than a grave, deliberative assembly.

'The truth, I believe, is, that the American Congress have really very little to do. All the multiplied details of local and municipal legislation fall within the province of the State governments, and the regulation of commerce and foreign intercourse practically includes all the important questions which they are called on to decide.'

It is a matter of curiosity, to compare with this account the real state of the case. In England, as our author says himself in another passage, the actual business of legislation is done by the Executive department of the Government. There are no standing committees of Parliament, and, as a

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general rule, the ministers prepare all the bills. At the time when our author wrote his book, the House of Commons met every day during the session at 4 o'clock, P. M. If a quorum (forty members) was not present when the Speaker took the chair,—a frequent occurrence,—the sitting was immediately adjourned, and the whole day was lost. If a quorum happened to be present, the House remained in session two or three hours, and transacted business commonly with a very thin attendance. A few times, in the course of the session, when some important political question was to be discussed, there was a call of the House, and a pretty general attendance of the members. On these occasions, the debates were sometimes prolonged through the night, and now and then, though very rarely, adjourned to a following one. Special Committees were from time to time appointed to examine and report upon particular subjects, and it is only in this form, that any part of the business of legislation was done by either House of Parliament in Committee.

So much for the pressure of business and the economy of time in the British Parliament. Let us now see how matters stand in this country. Here, no part of the work of legislation is performed by the Executive. The business is distributed at the commencement of a session of Congress among a variety of standing committees of the two Houses, who regularly prepare all the bills. These committees commonly meet every day at ten o'clock, and remain in session till twelve. At that hour the sitting of the two Houses commences, and, as a general rule, the members are all in attendance. They regularly remain together till four; and towards the close of the session, when business becomes pressing, they return and sit several hours in the evening.

The result is, that while in England the real work of legislation is done by the Ministry, and the actual labor of Parliament reduces itself to the attendance of from forty to fifty members two or three hours a day, for the purpose of registering without debate the bills presented to them; in this country the whole work of legislation is done by Congress; the members are regularly all in attendance, and are actually engaged in the despatch of business in one form or another, about six hours a day through the session. Our author's mistakes on this head are the more palpable, inasmuch as the points of comparison between the course of proceeding in England and in this country, to which we have adverted, are all particularly

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noted in other passages by himself. It is also worthy of remark, that at the very time when he was preparing his work, the British House of Commons reformed its mode of transacting business, and adopted the American usage of meeting every day at twelve o'clock. This is doubtless one of the instances alluded to with so much bitterness by the author in his preface, in which 'the institutions and experience of the United States were deliberately quoted by certain drivellers in the Reformed Parliament as affording safe precedents for British legislation,' and which were the means of securing to the world the mass of valuable information and elegant language, contained in the work before us.

Our author comments at considerable length upon the style of eloquence that prevails in Congress, of which he appears to entertain a very unfavorable opinion. After this follow some particular observations on the manner of Mr. Randolph, and a long analysis of a speech made by *a Mr. Tristram Burges* of Rhode Island, in reply to Mr. Cambreleng. The 'a Mr. Burges,' is rather comic, and brings to mind the 'one John Milton' of Whitelocke. Mr. Burges, the first man in his native State and a leading member of Congress, is a person, one would think, of at least as much consequence as the author of a second-rate novel. The analysis of his speech is written in a style of gross and vulgar virulence, not often to be met with in the most licentious newspapers. Will it be believed, that the leading topics of ridicule are the changes in his personal appearance, incident to advancing years?

'The orator commenced upon gray hair, and logically drew the conclusion, that, as such discoloration was the natural consequence of advanced years, any disrespectful allusion to the effect, implied contempt for the cause. Now, among every people in the world, Mahometan or Christian, civilized or barbarous, old age was treated with reverence. Even on the authority of Scripture, we are entitled to assert, that the gray head should be regarded as a crown of honor. All men must become old, unless they die young; and every member of this House must reckon on submitting to the common fate of humanity, &c. &c. &c., and so on for about a quarter of an hour.

'Having said all that human ingenuity could devise about gray hair, next came bald heads; and here the orator, with laudable candor, proceeded to admit that baldness might, in one sense, be considered a defect. Nature had apparently intended that

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the human cranium should be covered with hair, and there was no denying that the integument was both useful and ornamental. I am not sure whether, at this stage of the argument, Mr. Burges took advantage of the opportunity of impressing the House with a due sense of the virtues of bear's grease and macassar oil. I certainly remember anticipating an episode on nightcaps and Welsh wigs, but, on these, the orator was unaccountably silent. He duly informed the House, however, that many of the greatest heroes and philosophers could boast little covering on their upper region. Aristotle was bald, and so was Julius Cæsar, &c. &c. &c.

'It was not till the subject of baldness had become as stale and flat, as it certainly was unprofitable, that the audience were introduced to the vulture, who was kept so long hovering over the head of Mr. Burges's opponent, that one only felt anxious that he should make his pounce and have done with it. Altogether, to give the vulture—like the devil—his due, he was a very quiet bird, and more formidable from the offensive nature of his droppings, than any danger to be apprehended from his beak or claws. In truth, he did seem to be somewhat scurvily treated by the orator, who, after keeping him fluttering about the hall for some three hours, at last rather unceremoniously disclaimed all connexion with him, and announced that he—Mr. Burges—was "an eagle soaring in his pride of place, and, therefore, not by a moping owl to be hawked at, and killed!" This was too much for gravity; but, luckily, the day's oration had reached its termination, and the House broke up in a state of greater exhilaration, than could reasonably have been anticipated from the nature and extent of the infliction.'

Whatever may be thought of the eloquence of Mr. Burges, it will hardly be doubted by any one who has read the above extract, that our author is a most acute and especially candid and liberal critic. No wonder, that with so exquisite a sensibility to the proprieties and delicacies of social intercourse, he should claim the character of an arbiter of elegance, and undertake to sit in judgment upon the 'shadowy differences' between the forms of civilization in the various regions of Christendom. What unpardonable sin the distinguished Representative of Rhode Island has committed, that has drawn down upon him this tremendous visitation, (which of course he cannot hope to survive) we are not informed. Probably the head and front of his offending is, that he has the misfortune to differ in opinion from the author of Cyril Thornton upon the question of the expediency of a legislative protec-

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tion for domestic industry. Mr. Cambreleng, on the other hand, by happening to agree with him upon that point, rises at once to the rank of 'a gentleman of great talent, and decidedly the first political economist in the country.'

The remarks on the character and eloquence of Mr. Webster, though strongly tinged with the silly affectation in style to which we have adverted, are conceived in a better spirit, as regards the subject, and we extract them with pleasure, as one of the few passages that do some credit to the discernment and feelings of the author.

'The person, however, who has succeeded in rivetting most strongly the attention of the whole Union, is undoubtedly Mr. Webster. From the Gulf of St. Lawrence to that of Mexico, from Cape Sable to Lake Superior, his name has become, as it were, a household word. Many disapprove his politics, but none deny his great talents, his unrivalled fertility of argument, or his power, even still more remarkable, of rapid and comprehensive induction. In short, it is universally believed by his countrymen, that Mr. Webster is a great man; and in this matter I certainly make no pretension to singularity of creed. Mr. Webster *is* a man of whom any country might well be proud. His knowledge is at once extensive and minute, his intellectual resources very great; and, whatever may be the subject of discussion, he is sure to shed on it the light of an active, acute, and powerful mind.

'I confess, however, I did meet Mr. Webster under the influence of some prejudice. From the very day of my arrival in the United States, I had been made involuntarily familiar with his name and pretensions. Gentlemen sent me his speeches to read. When I talked of visiting Boston, the observation uniformly followed, "Ah! there you will see Mr. Webster." When I reached Boston, I encountered condolence on all hands. "You are very unfortunate," said my friends, "Mr. Webster set out yesterday for Washington." Whenever, at Philadelphia and Baltimore, it became known that I had visited Boston, the question, "Did you see Mr. Webster?" was a sequence as constant and unvarying as that of the seasons.

'The result of all this was, that the name of Webster became invested in my ear with an adventitious cacophony. It is not pleasant to admire upon compulsion, and the very pre-eminence of this gentleman had been converted into something of a bore. To Washington, however, I came, armed with letters to the unconscious source of my annoyance. The first night of my arrival I met him at a ball. A dozen people pointed him out to

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my observation, and the first glance rivetted my attention. I had never seen any countenance more expressive of intellectual power.

'The forehead of Mr. Webster is high, broad, and advancing. The cavity beneath the eyebrow is remarkably large. The eye is deeply set, but full, dark, and penetrating in the highest degree; the nose prominent, and well defined; the mouth marked by that rigid compression of the lips by which the New Englanders are distinguished. When Mr. Webster's countenance is in repose, its expression struck me as cold and forbidding, but in conversation it lightens up; and when he smiles, the whole impression it communicates is at once changed. His voice is clear, sharp, and firm, without much variety of modulation; but when animated, it rings on the ear like a clarion.

'As an orator, I should imagine Mr. Webster's forte to lie in the department of pure reason. I cannot conceive his even attempting an appeal to the feelings. It could not be successful; and he has too much knowledge of his own powers to encounter failure. In debate his very countenance must tell. Few men would hazard a voluntary sophism under the glance of that eye, so cold, so keen, so penetrating, so expressive of intellectual power. A single look would be enough to wither up a whole volume of bad logic.

'In the Senate, I had, unfortunately, no opportunity of hearing Mr. Webster display his great powers as a debater. During my stay, the subjects on which he happened to speak were altogether of inferior interest. In the Supreme Court he delivered several legal arguments, which certainly struck me as admirable, both in regard to matter and manner. The latter was neither vehement nor subdued. It was the manner of conscious power, tranquil and self-possessed.

'Mr. Webster may be at once acquitted of all participation in the besetting sins of the orators of his age and country. I even doubt, whether, in any single instance, he can be fairly charged with having uttered a sentence of mere declamation. His speeches have nothing about them of gaudiness and glitter. Words with him are instruments, not ends; the vehicles, not of sound merely, but of sense and reason. He utters no periods full of noise and fury, like the voice of an idiot, signifying—nothing; and it certainly exhibits proof that the taste of the Americans is not yet irretrievably depraved, when an orator like Mr. Webster, who despises all the stale and petty trickery of his art, is called by acclamation to the first place.

'In conversation, Mr. Webster is particularly agreeable. It seems to delight him, when he mingles with his friends, to cast

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off the trammels of weighty cogitation, and merge the lawyer and the statesman in the companion ;—a more pleasant and instructive one I have rarely known in any country. As a politician, the opinions of Mr. Webster are remarkably free from intolerance. His knowledge is both accurate and extensive. He is one of the few men in America who understand the British Constitution, not as a mere abstract system of laws and institutions, but in its true form and pressure, as it works and acts upon the people, modified by a thousand influences, of which his countrymen in general know nothing.'

The censures, bestowed by our author upon the style of speaking which prevails in Congress, though ridiculously exaggerated, have some foundation in truth. While the leading orators in both Houses are quite equal or perhaps superior to the first in the British Parliament, the average is a good deal lower ; in other words, there are more indifferent speeches in proportion to the good, precisely because there is a greater amount of speaking in proportion to the business done. In England, the debate on general questions is commonly left to some two or three of the leading members on each side. The others reserve themselves for local and particular questions, upon which they are particularly informed. Here, on the contrary, when a great question comes up, every gentleman, who can speak at all, seems to think it necessary to declare his opinion at length. The reasons for this difference are sufficiently obvious, but it is equally so, that the British practice is more favorable to a prompt and intelligent despatch of business.

In connexion with the account of his visit to Washington, and in two or three other passages of his work, our author comments at some length, as we have already remarked, upon the principles and operation of the political institutions of the country. His conclusions are all unfavorable, but as the premises from which they are drawn are generally common-place, we really see no reason, why he should have thought it necessary to write a new book, for the purpose of bringing before the British public political views, which may be found about as well stated in every newspaper and review. His theory is, that a purely popular government is impracticable, especially one that involves the principle of universal suffrage, and that this is the rock upon which we must finally split :—that we go along very well at present, while the population is



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comparatively scanty, but that, when it becomes more dense, the non-proprietors will take all the power into their own hands, abolish property, and throw the whole country into confusion. This result he considers not only as inevitable, but as not very distant, and as likely to occur within the period of the present or the next generation.

As there is no novelty in these objections, so the answer which, as our author says, was made to them repeatedly by intelligent gentlemen with whom he conversed upon this subject, is equally familiar, and to our minds perfectly satisfactory, although it failed to clear up the doubts of the worthy traveller. 'The general answer is,' he says, 'that the state of things which I have ventured to describe is very distant. It is enough for each generation to look to itself, and we leave it to our descendants some centuries hence, to take care of their interests, as we do of ours. We enjoy all manner of freedom and security under our present institutions, and really feel very little concern about the evils that may afflict our posterity.' To us, we must confess, this language appears to be conformable, not merely to practical good sense, but to the soundest and deepest theories of political science. The best government for every community is that which is best adapted to its actual condition, and if the one best adapted to its actual condition be also the one actually established and in operation, it would seem to be the height of madness to make complaint, or to wish for a change. Now it is fully admitted by our author, that the present Constitution is the one best adapted to the actual condition of the United States; he goes farther even, and admits with emphasis,—how consistently with many observations in other parts of the work, it is not for us to say,—that if the present Constitution could be maintained, it would be the best of all possible governments. 'At present, the United States are perhaps more safe from revolutionary contention, than any other country in the world. But this safety consists in one circumstance alone. *The great majority of the people are possessed of property:* have what is called a stake in the hedge; and are therefore by interest opposed to all measures, which may tend to its insecurity. It is for such a condition of society that the present Constitution was framed; and *could this great bulwark of government be considered as permanent as it is effective, there could be no assignable limit to the prosperity of a people, so favored.*'

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The result is, then, upon the statements and admissions of our author himself, that we have in operation in this country the form of government which, abstractly considered, is the best of all possible forms, and which is at the same time the one best adapted to our actual condition. Is not this enough? It really seems to us, that a government, which can with truth be so described, is precisely the *beau idéal*, upon which the patriot in every country should fix his eye as the perfect,—though perhaps in his own case unattainable,—model; and that the country, in which it is actually established and in full operation, has nothing more in this respect to wish or hope. To obtain a form of government well adapted to their actual condition, and at the same time making some distant approach to those which appear most plausible in theory, has been heretofore the highest attainment of the most favored communities,—we had almost said the limit of their ambition. In our particular case, by an extraordinary concurrence of favorable circumstances, the best possible form of government is also the one best adapted to the actual condition of the people, and, what is of still more importance, the one actually established. Such, we say, are the admissions of the author: and if this state of things do not satisfy him, we can only say that he is even more fastidious on the subject of political institutions, than he is on the higher matters of the mode of eating eggs and the *tournure* of the New York ladies.

But, he says, this state of things cannot last. An unfavorable change in the condition of the people is inevitable: the non-proprietors must in the course of time become the majority. What then? Admit that all this is true: that a change in the condition of the people will have taken place before the year 2000, and that a form of Government different from the one now established will be better adapted to that state of things, than the present one. Does it therefore follow, that we are now to destroy our present Government and institute the other? Does not our author perceive, that for the very reason that the latter is better adapted to a different state of society, it is of course not so well adapted to the existing one? Suppose that it were supernaturally revealed to a person, standing firmly on both his legs at the age of twenty-one, that at the age of fifty he would fracture one of them and be obliged to have it amputated. He would no doubt regard this

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as a misfortune, but would he, as a prudent man, undertake to remedy the evil by sending for a surgeon and having one of his limbs amputated immediately? Would he act wisely to deprive himself of the use of a sound leg for thirty years, because a wooden one might after a certain period be better adapted to the existing state of his body, than one of his natural ones? This is a correct illustration of the course which appears to be recommended by our author, and which we certainly consider as most extraordinary. If we are destined to suffer an unfavorable change in our condition, so much the worse. When the change comes, we or our descendants must meet it, as we or they best may. In the mean time, we are well, and very well. Policy, duty, common sense demand of us to let very well alone.

If, as our author affirms, the present Government of the United States be in theory the best of all possible systems, and be also the one best adapted to our present condition, it is of course absolutely and in all respects the best we could now have, whatever changes in it may hereafter be rendered necessary or expedient by changes in the state of the country. But, after all, how does it appear that the threatened unfavorable change in the state of the country is so inevitable as our author appears to suppose? In this, as in many other cases, the worthy traveller, who is a little addicted to delivering oracles *ex cathedrâ*, has not condescended to give us very explicitly the reasons on which he founds his opinion. He tells us merely, that 'the population of the United States doubles itself in about twenty-five years; that at this rate it will amount in half a century to fifty millions; that before that period, it is *very certain* that the pressure of the population on the means of subsistence, especially in the Atlantic States, will be great: that the price of labor will have fallen, while that of the necessaries of life must be prodigiously enhanced; that the poorer and more suffering class will want the means of emigrating to a distant region of unoccupied territory; that poverty and misery will be abroad, and that the great majority of the people will be without property of any kind, except the thews and sinews with which God has endowed them.' Why or how all this is so *very certain*, he does not say, and as the burden of proof rests upon himself, he has of course failed in sustaining his position. This is all which, for the purpose of refuting his theory,

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it would be necessary for us to add upon the subject. Before he can reasonably expect us to abolish the best of all possible Governments, and substitute a confessedly inferior one, he is bound, not merely to assert, but to prove to us, that the change in our condition, which would, according to him, render such a proceeding expedient, is likely to occur. We may add, however, that his conclusions as to the probable state of things half a century hence,—however certain he may think them,—are directly in the teeth of the experience of the last two centuries. During that time, population has regularly advanced at a rate on the average considerably more rapid than the one he states as probable in future, but is so far from pressing on the means of subsistence, that the necessaries and comforts of life were never so abundant as they are at this moment,—that the price of labor never was so high;—that emigration is checked, not because the poorer classes want the means of emigrating, but because their labor is in such demand that they are under no temptation to go elsewhere;—that poverty and misery are hardly known;—and that the majority of the people are all,—as he himself says,—in possession of more or less property. Why this is so, is just as evident as the fact is certain. The progress of population naturally brings with it the division of labor and the improved methods of applying it, which of course render it more productive, and reward the laborer with a greater amount of the necessaries and comforts of life. No sufficient or even plausible reason can be given, why the same process should not continue for the two next centuries, that has been going on for the two last. The history of what is, as a French writer justly remarks, is the history of what has been and of what is to be. For ourselves, we are quite as confident as our author professes himself to be of the contrary, that so far as the progress of population alone is concerned, and leaving out of view all other circumstances, the changes that are likely to occur in the state of the country will be for the better, and not for the worse: that for this and the two next centuries, the comforts and necessaries of life will be more abundant, in proportion to the numbers of the people, than they are now;—the price of labor higher;—emigration less considerable;—poverty and misery less frequent;—and the majority of the people better off in the way of property. Whether other circumstances of an unfavorable character may not occur during that period, that will counter-

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act wholly or in part these results, is a different question, and one which we need not examine for the purpose of the present argument, since our author rests his case entirely on the supposed unfavorable effect of the single cause, to which we have alluded.

The views of our author, upon the general principles of the political institutions of the United States, are therefore entirely baseless and extravagant. His observations on particular points are hardly more correct, nor would it be easy to reconcile either the spirit or the details of the different passages in which they are respectively contained. After pronouncing, as we have seen, *ex cathedrâ*, that the Constitution is perfect, if it would only last, he finds, on examining the several parts in detail, hardly any thing to approve. The principle of elective magistracies is bad;—the shortness of the time for which the President is chosen is bad;—the exclusion of the Cabinet Secretaries from Congress is bad;—and, to pass over other minor points, in the opinion of this most intelligent and judicious observer, *the Union of the States is bad!!!* 'The experiment of periodically electing the chief officer of the Commonwealth has been tried and failed. While *confessing the grossness of the failure*, many Americans would willingly attribute it to the injudicious provisions for the collection of the national suffrage.' This interesting piece of information is,—as the newspapers say,—'important if true.' We had hitherto supposed, in the simplicity of our hearts, that the chief officer of the Commonwealth had been for half a century past elected in most of the States annually, in some every three or four years, and for the United States at large every four years, in such a way that the affair, instead of being 'a gross and acknowledged failure,' had passed off on the whole to the general satisfaction. Within the limited compass of our observation, we have never happened to meet with an individual who wished the present system to be changed, or with any publication, recommending a mode of designating a chief magistrate, other than that of popular election. So far as the office of President of the United States is concerned, which our author appears to have had particularly in view, we had supposed it to be generally acknowledged, not that the experiment had failed, but that it had succeeded a good deal better than perhaps could reasonably have been expected. Of the seven Presidents, who have

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been elected under it, the six first, viz: Washington, the two Adamses, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe,—though certainly far from being on a level in point of qualifications for the office,—were all, by general acknowledgment, among the most eminent and best qualified persons in the country. Mr. Monroe, the least conspicuous of the number, is yet spoken of by our author, deservedly, in very handsome terms, and was as much superior to the hereditary rulers of the ordinary European standard, as Washington was to him. As to the qualifications of the present incumbent, which are still the subject of party controversy, there would no doubt be a difference of opinion. A large and respectable portion of the citizens who opposed his election would probably say, that in his case the system has in fact failed. But were this even admitted, it might still be pertinently asked, whether any system can be expected to produce the best possible results oftener than six times out of seven. On the other hand, the large majority of the citizens who elected General Jackson, look upon him as the very Phœnix of Presidents, and from the tone of our author's remarks upon the subject, we should have supposed that he inclined to this opinion. He certainly, if his account may be believed, 'retired from the interview he had with General Jackson, with sentiments of very sincere respect for the intellectual and moral qualities of the American President.' We doubt whether he could have said as much as this, of a majority of the hereditary rulers of Europe. Add to this, that in the innumerable instances in which the same system has been applied in the several States, it has brought out, almost uniformly, men of great respectability,—often the very first men in the country, such as Jefferson, Dewitt Clinton, and Jay,—and in no one case, as far as we are informed, any person notoriously incapable. We cannot but think, that instead of having grossly failed, it must be regarded on the whole, as having in a remarkable manner succeeded. In fact, the capacity of the people at large to elect the principal political functionaries, is considered, by competent judges, as one of the least questionable points in the theory of government. Montesquieu, at least as high an authority on a political question as the author of Cyril Thornton, tells us that 'the people are admirably well qualified to elect those who are to be entrusted with any portion of their power. If there were a doubt of this, we need only to recol-

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lect the continual succession of astonishing elections that were made by the Athenians and the Romans, which certainly cannot be attributed to chance.'* The history of the United States, so far as we have proceeded, will be regarded by future political philosophers, as furnishing another example, not less striking than those of Athens and Rome.

While, in one part of his work, our author pronounces the Constitution to be the best of all possible governments, if it could but last, and in another finds fault with almost every important provision, he finally tells us in a third, with great frankness, that he does not know what it is. *The difficulty of understanding the Federal Constitution,* is the running title of one of his pages, and in the text beneath it he remarks, that 'of the Federal Government it is difficult to speak with any precision, because it is difficult to ascertain with any precision the principles on which it is founded.' If he had had the good sense to wait till he did understand it before he wrote upon it, he would have spared himself much trouble, and the world a very useless and mischievous book. In connexion with this remark, he introduces the opinion alluded to above, that the Union of the States is a bad thing, which he developes in a passage occupying two or three pages, under the running title of *The Disadvantages of the Union.* These supposed disadvantages appear to resolve themselves into this: that it is difficult for States, having different climates and productions,—some growing cotton, rice, tobacco and sugar, and others wheat and maize,—some agricultural, some manufacturing, and some commercial,—to reconcile their adverse interests, so as to go along comfortably together under the same government as members of one body politic. It did not occur to the worthy traveller, that the precise circumstance, of a difference in productions and occupations, constitutes a unity instead of a diversity of interest,—that the opposition of interest is between different persons engaged in the same occupations,—and that for South Carolina and Massachusetts to quarrel because one raises cotton and the other manufactures it, would be, as the late Mr. Dexter very properly remarked, about as reasonable as for two persons of different sexes to quarrel about the difference in their physical conformation. But without undertaking to refute these crude objections, it may be sufficient to remark

* Spirit of Laws. Book 2. Chap. 2.

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that our author's doubts about the advantages of the Union afford the strongest proof, which he could possibly have given, how little he in fact understands the Federal Constitution or any of the political institutions of the country. To those who possess any tolerably correct notions on these subjects, it is superfluous to say that the great idea of the Union of the States is, in substance, the whole Federal Constitution:—the particulars, excepting so far as they affect the existence or non-existence of this vital principle, are mere matters of form. Differences of opinion about the construction of the instrument, with the same exception, are comparatively unimportant. The right claimed by South Carolina to annul the Constitution and laws at discretion, comes, of course, within the exception, and has fortunately been put down by the unanimous acclamation of the whole country; but, as to the other points upon which differences of opinion have existed, such as whether the General Government has or has not a right, under the Constitution, to establish a bank or a national university, to lay out new roads and make other internal improvements, and so forth, —the importance of their being decided in one way or another is like dust in a balance, compared with that of the great principle of the Constitution, a real and effective union of the States for all purposes of foreign and international concern. This is the prominent, all-important, we had almost said only important feature in our political institutions; and it is therefore not to be wondered at that an observer, who considers the union as an evil, should be at a loss to understand the nature and operation of the Government. On this subject, as on the one to which we before alluded, the true doctrine was explained to him in this country, but seems to have been lost upon him, although it is textually set down with great candor in his book. He is of the class of persons foretold in Scripture, who, hearing, were to hear, but not understand. In answer to his crude and puerile objections to the policy of the Union, he was told at Washington by a distinguished member of the House of Representatives, in strong and rather coarse language, provoked probably by his impertinence, that 'the Union was necessary to prevent us from cutting each others' throats.' This is the conclusion of the whole matter in a nut-shell. If our author had possessed wit enough to comprehend the meaning of this brief oracle, which is yet not very obscure, he would have gone home a wiser man than he came,



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and have written a much better book than he has done. The Union relieves our great and growing family of independent States from the curse of continual war, which has always desolated Europe, and secures to them, in actual reality, what has been often regarded as the golden dream of visionary speculators,—PERPETUAL PEACE. This single advantage puts a new face upon the whole political condition of the country. The continual recurrence of wars with other neighboring states,—the necessity of providing for them and carrying them on with efficiency,—the consequences that naturally result from them,—are the causes, that have mainly determined the form of the government in every other nation of which we know the history. The preliminary establishment on this continent of the opposite principle of union and perpetual peace, not only 'prevents us from cutting each others' throats,' —not only relieves us from the destruction of life and property incident to war,—but enables us to simplify our political machinery, and to go along quietly and prosperously under institutions, which in a different state of things would be impracticable. It has been said by some indiscreet citizens, in the course of the late controversies, that the true motto of the patriot is *Liberty first and Union afterwards*, but the truth is, that the preliminary existence of the Union is the necessary condition of the liberty we enjoy. It is owing to the Union and the permanent internal peace consequent upon it, that we are able to combine a complete security for personal rights with an extension of the sphere of individual action, and a contraction of that of government, greater than were ever imagined possible before. Abolish the Union,—introduce,—what would necessarily follow,—a system of permanent war among the States, instead of the existing one of permanent peace,—and you introduce, of course, the vast military establishments, the triumphant military leaders, the intolerable burdens, and the *passive obedience*, which regularly accompany the train of that great scourge of the human race. Universal suffrage,—elective magistracies,—representative assemblies, the liberty of speech, the press and public worship,—trial by jury,---would of course disappear at once. We hold these, and all the other personal and political privileges of which we are so justly proud, simply and solely on the condition of maintaining the Union.

The Union of the States is therefore the Alpha and Omega, —the A. B. C. and X. Y. Z.---the beginning, middle and end,

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—the all in all,—of our political institutions. A writer, who professes to consider it as an evil, only shows that he has not obtained the most remote insight into their true principles and character. After mentioning the answer given to him by 'the distinguished Representative' as above quoted, he adds, that '*if* the Union be as important as it appears to be considered in the United States, it were to be wished that it were more likely to endure;' and predicts, no doubt with great regret, that 'the eral Constitution, like other bubbles, is at any time liable to burst, when the world will discover that its external glitter covered nothing but wind.' We are glad,—so far as our humble judgment can be supposed to have any weight with so great a personage,—to assure him that the Union is in no danger. The experience of the last year has done much to confirm the assurance of its long duration, which the soundest thinkers have always felt from a consideration of the circumstances of the country. The Federal Constitution is not, as our author supposes, a glittering bubble, covering nothing but wind, and liable to burst at any moment. It is the beautiful and well-proportioned form, belonging by nature to a living, substantial, powerful, active and healthy political body. To destroy it would be just about as practicable, as to tear off the integuments from the frame of a living man: the operation could in either case only be effected by the complete destruction of life. The States are not only formally and by compact, but naturally and substantially, ONE PEOPLE. They are, with slight and unimportant circumstances of exception, one in their origin; one by their geographical position and frequent relations; one by their community of manners, language, laws and religion. These,—whatever our author may think of it,—are not airy nothings, like the wind that inflates a bubble, but substantial realities. They *naturally* carry with them the political unity of the communities among which they exist; and what nature,—God,—has united, man *cannot* put asunder. It is not merely impolitic and inexpedient, but impossible permanently to separate the States. If, by any accidental convulsion, (and such an event is hardly within the compass of contingencies,) they should be temporarily separated, they would rush together again immediately, perhaps under a different form of union —with a wholly irresistible force of attraction. To attempt to break up the Union by ordinances and speeches in Convention,—the 'paper bullets of the brain,'—is like launching

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one of our author's glittering bubbles in the face of a strong north-easter. Every new rail road,---every additional steamboat, as it takes up its long line of march down the mighty Mississippi,—does more to strengthen the bonds of the Union, than all the speeches that have ever been made against it have done to weaken them. The very newspaper, in which such sentiments are contained, is itself an antidote to the poison it diffuses.

But this is not the time nor the place for a full development of this interesting topic. Our readers are already as much fatigued with our observations upon our author, as we are with his upon the country, and it is necessary to bring them to a close. If there be anywhere an appearance of asperity in our language, we trust that it will be considered as fully justified by the extracts we have given, and especially the outrageous and wholly inexcusable attack upon the gray hairs of Mr. Burges. We cannot conclude without repeating the expression of our regret, at this new example of narrow-mindedness, prejudice and malignity, in the judgments of British travellers upon this country. To every impartial observer, it is apparent that in the order of Providence a great work is in progress here, which is destined to figure hereafter in the rolls of history as one of the most remarkable achievements of the Genius of Civilization. A field has been opened, upon which the intelligence and refinement of a highly cultivated portion of our race may operate without the political restraints which have generally accompanied a great intellectual and moral improvement in the state of society. A numerous and continually increasingcluster of neighboring States have substituted, as the principle of their mutual relations, perpetual peace for perpetual war. The result of the concurrence of these auspicious circumstances has been almost magical. The whole continent is like a vast bee-hive, instinct throughout with life, motion and a joyous activity. Cities,—empires,—(Lowell, Ohio,—our whole Western Paradise justify the statement) rise from the bosom of the earth like exhalations. The wilderness blossoms like the rose; the very rocks and sand-banks (witness Nantucket,—witness all New England,) pour forth products more rich and abundant, than any that ever came from the gold and diamond mines of Peru and Golconda. New forms of government, that had hitherto been regarded as the visions of philosophic dreamers, too beautiful to be ever

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realized on this terrestrial sphere, are going on from year to year, in quiet and tranquil operation, in the full view of an astonished and admiring world. As a political power, the country has taken, at the outset of its course, its position among the leading States of Christendom; and the imagination is dazzled in looking forward to its future probable destinies. Such are the scenes, which the Western continent now presents to the eye of the philosophic traveller. If there be any thing to equal them in moral magnificence in the annals of the world, we confess that we have looked for it in vain. With prospects like these before them, it is painful,—it is pitiful,—to see a succession of observers, from the 'most thinking nation' in Europe, coming out, professedly on purpose to examine men and manners, and incapable of seeing or feeling any thing but some trifling and generally accidental circumstance, that happens to interfere with their national prejudice or personal pride. The shopmen look too hardly at them;—the merchants refuse to learn Sanscrit of them;—their fellow-boarders eat eggs in a way to which they are not accustomed;—from all which it follows of course that the people are a race of *brutal barbarians*,—that the Union of the States is a *disadvantage*,—and the Constitution a *glittering bubble*. This is worse than the folly of the cobbler of Athens, who, when asked his opinion of a fine statue of Venus, which had just been exhibited, said that he had remarked nothing but a wrong stitch in one of the sandals. An Athenian blockhead, as was well observed by the sage of Bolt Court, is the worst of all blockheads; and truly the blockheads of the modern Athens appear to be determined not to yield the palm to their ancient prototypes.

The apparent motive of all this misrepresentation is even more revolting and ridiculous than the thing itself. If there be one among the achievements of the English nation, of which, more than any other, they have a right to be justly proud, it is the foundation of the great English empire that is now growing up on the western side of the Atlantic: yet of all the European travellers, the English alone are incapable of looking with the least complacency upon their own work. Prince Talleyrand, Baron Humboldt, Châteaubriand, Volney, the Duke de la Rochefoucault were certainly as competent judges of men and manners,—as well qualified to appreciate the value of political institutions,—as the Fauxes, the

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Fearons and the Trollopes, or even the Halls and the Hamiltons. All these, and a multitude of others of similar pretensions from the continent of Europe, who have published their observations upon the United States,—while they have pointed out, of course, what they regarded as objectionable,—appear to have received, on the whole, a favorable impression of the general aspect of society. But no sooner do the Chesterfields of Holborn and St. Giles,—the British Talleyrands of the sentry-box and ward-room,—set foot upon our soil, than it changes at once to a wild and barren waste, the abode of nothing but rudeness, ignorance and barbarism. Let us hope, that after a while, and under happier auspices, some pilgrim from the mother country may arrive among us, with a view sufficiently expansive to take in the wonders of improvement that are here in progress,—with a heart sufficiently English to rejoice in the achievements of Englishmen, without inquiring the degrees of latitude and longitude, or the year of grace in which they were performed,---and with a pen powerful enough to do justice to the subject. He might offer to his countrymen, as the result of his observations, a work more interesting and instructive than the celebrated *Germany* of Madame de Staël. Some approach to this was looked for at the hands of our author, as a person of established literary reputation. How miserably the expectation has been baulked, our readers have seen. The failure, though on many accounts much to be regretted, is a far more serious misfortune to him than to us. Another better qualified knight-errant will achieve the adventure, and carry off the prize. Perhaps we may finally owe to the graceful genius of some English De Staël the justice, which the men of the mother country have hitherto denied us, and which the daughter of Necker was the first to render to our kinsmen of Germany. In the mean time, we are doing very well,—have the world before us,---and can afford to wait. When Cardinal Fleury was Prime Minister of France, at the age of eighty-five, a young nobleman requested something of him, which his Eminence, being at the momenta little out of humor, was not inclined to grant. 'Sir,' said the Cardinal, 'you shall never obtain what you want during my life time.' *Monseigneur*, replied the other, *j'attendrai.* 'I will wait, my Lord.'

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